University of Alberta

Building Curriculum for the Education of Youth Workers In the Church

by

Gerald R. Fisher ©

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation focuses on the building of curriculum for the education of youth workers in the church. The author addressed two hermeneutic questions in designing the curriculum. (1) What curriculum for preparing youth workers best affirms, and conforms to, the actual experience of being a youth worker? and (2) How does the actual experience of being a youth worker inform or call into question, the guiding ideas we rely on to currently prepare youth workers?

The author did extensive research with youth and youth workers in western Canada by using surveys, research workshops, and interviews to obtain a rich and thick source of data. Nine themes emerge from the data. The nine themes are: (1) family life, (2) cultural connectedness, (3) counseling, (4) administration, (5) communications, (6) teaching, (7) leadership development, (8) spiritual formation, and (9) mentoring. From these nine themes come five curriculum development principles. The five principles are: (1) shared praxis, (2) relational/interactive mentoring, (3) cultural appropriateness/awareness, (4) skill-building, and (5) variety in delivery systems (i.e. distance education).

Out of these themes and principles the author designed a curriculum for the education of youth workers. The curriculum is intended to be used in seminaries and therefore some of its initial design reflects that context, as well as, the world and needs of youth workers. The author assumes that the curriculum which takes place in the interaction between instructor and students will vary from that which is written. Further, once the curriculum is evaluated it will change and keep changing. However, the initial

proposed written curriculum reflects the lived experience of the youth workers who participated in the research. The author also believes that if the taught curriculum is evaluated as proposed then the ever-changing curriculum will also reflect the lived experience of youth workers and it will also address present deficiencies in the way education is delivered to youth workers.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter Page

I. Introduction to the study: Background of the study 1

Churches are interested in youth work 2

My own interest in youth work 3

The purpose of the study 5

The need for the study 6

Delimitations 9

Limitations 10

Assumptions 11

Definitions of terms 12

The relational factor in research 14

Participant involvement in designing research 17

Summary 18

II. Building the foundation for a curriculum: Introduction 19

Curriculum: The learner 20

Curriculum: Praxis and critical reflection 22

Curriculum: What is worth knowing? 26

Curriculum: Developed from life experience learning 29

The role of youth workers 31

The role of youth workers: Church contexts 33

Understanding the world of youth: Adolescent needs 36

Understanding the world of youth: Adolescent development 37

Understanding the world of youth: Popular culture 41

Together is the way to build curriculum 43

Summary 46

III. Research methods and design: Introduction 48

Finding a research orientation: Reconciling my Christian faith 49

Research needs of the church 53

The presence of imagination 56

Research design 60

A summary of research activity 60

Component#1: Youth worker workshops 61

Component#2: Interview current youth workers 63

Component#3: Assessing course offerings for youth workers 64

Component#4: A youth questionnaire 64

Ensuring data trustworthiness 65

Validity 67

Reliability 69

Data analysis 70

Description of research 71

The interviews 74

Ethical considerations 75

Summary 75

IV. Towards giving youth and youth workers a voice: Introduction 77

Data presentation and analysis 78

Listening to junior and senior high youth 78

Percentages and numbers of youth involved in the survey 79

The survey examined 83

Question # 1: What grade will you be entering this fall? 83

Question # 2: Does your church have a youth group for your age level? 83

Question # 3: Does your church have a youth worker on staff either full or part-time? 85

Question # 4: What, in your opinion, is the most important work this person(youth worker) does? 88

Question # 5: Would you like your church to have a youth worker on staff? 89

Question # 6: In your opinion, what is the most important reason for having a youth worker on a church staff? 90

Question # 7: In your opinion, what type of education or training should a youth worker have? 95

Questions asked of the Baptist Leadership Training School students 96

Workshops with youth workers 100

Workshop data 102

Workshop # 1 Calgary 102

Workshop # 2 Edmonton 107

Workshop # 3 Vancouver 111

Workshop # 4 Regina 114

Bridging the gap between the present and the ideal and how curriculum might help 118

Vancouver workshop 118

Edmonton workshop 119

Regina workshop 120

Calgary workshop 121

The voice of youth workers 123

The interviews 124

What the data revealed 125

Question # 1: What has motivated you to want to work with youth? 125

Question # 2: What training have you received which has particularly helped you in your work with youth? 127

Question # 3: What components of your job do you feel the least equipped to handle? 130

Question # 4: If you were designing a curriculum to train youth workers, such as yourself, what top three priorities would the courses address? 130

Themes 140

Spiritual formation 140

Family life 141

Cultural connectedness 143

Counseling 144

Administration 145

Communication 146

Teaching 147

Leadership development 148

Mentoring 148

Summary 149

V. Principles for developing and organizing curriculum: Introduction 151

The principles explained 152

A transformational approach to curriculum 155

Curriculum design as a defining exercise 158

Summary 161

VI. Reflections on a curriculum project 164

Personal reflections 164

Major findings 167

Changes I would make if I were to do the research again 171

Indications for further research 172

Where to from here? 174

Bibliography 175

Appendix A: Course syllabi 181

Tables

Tables

1 . Issues which make learning significant / 31

2. At risk issues for adolescents / 40

3. Comparison of numbers of responses by junior and senior high youth to youth survey / 81

4. Analysis of responses to question # 2: Does your church have a youth group for your age / 84

5. Response to survey viewed in percentages of total responses received / 85

6. Analysis of responses to question # 3: Does your church have a youth worker on staff, either full or part-time? / 86

7. Responses to question # 3 revealed in percentages / 87

8. Analysis of responses to question: Would you like for your church to have a youth worker on staff? / 89

9. The most common responses to the question: In your opinion, what education or training should a youth worker have? / 95

10. Questions asked of the BLTS students / 97

11. The correlation between question # 1 and question # 4 / 97

Figures

Figures

1. Comparisions of responses of junior, senior high, and post high youth to youth survey from various sites / 82

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

It is a matter of stating the obvious to say that the "problems" of youth and the concept of youthfulness occupy a significant amount of media and social space as we draw close to the close of the twentieth century. Youth are a target audience for marketing products, especially products related to popular culture. The desire of older adults to appear and to act youthful is evident everywhere in our North American society. At the same time, the population generally is ageing.

The statements above express in words a phenomenon that is easily seen and experienced by the general populace. But what about the youth themselves? What are their needs as a particular segment of society? Has all the media and market attention acted to depersonalize youth, to see their large numbers as a market group but not see their needs as individuals?

In what ways can older adults, as parents, teachers, youth workers, and friends be companions and share in the lived experience of young adults to assist them in their journey of maturation? Youth is a segment of our society who are members of our families, students in our junior and senior high schools, members of churches and other religious groups. However, because they are not yet fully adult, they do not easily fit the adult or dominant world. Older adults sometimes find them frustrating and confusing. They also find it easy to leave them in their youth culture where they relate only to peers.

However, emerging in greater numbers are people who wish to relate to youth. One group are youth workers employed by churches and community groups to work with young adults. They, themselves, are young adults. Many are just entering the world of adulthood having recently gone through their own adolescent journey. They remember vividly the struggles and hazards of their own growth. They care and wish to help their younger brothers and sisters in the journey.

Churches Are Interested In Youth Work

In the past decade churches have increased their interest in youth work. This increased interest is true of the churches of the Baptist Union of Western Canada, of which I am the Executive Minister. One prime indicator of the increased interest has been the practice on the part of many of these churches to hire youth workers, either full-time or part-time. The workers, both young men and women, come to their positions with a wide variety of formal training for their work. The essential ingredient for their being hired is their perceived ability to work with youth and their stated desire to do so.

Once these youth workers are hired they are faced with the fact that, in many ways, they are teachers. For example, they will be asked to create and follow a curriculum. However, churches are not like schools, the other primary institution in our society where people are trained to work with youth. In the schools teachers may come to their positions with a variety of educational backgrounds; nevertheless, there is a base commonality to their training. Furthermore a base level of education is required for teacher certification. Churches, obviously, differ from schools. These differences are especially apparent in the church's expectation of the basic level of education necessary for youth workers. In the case of their ministers/pastors, however, churches are very similar to schools in that, like schools, a base level of education is necessary for professional certification.

The situation outlined above poses a problem for both churches and potential youth workers. As they search for a youth worker, churches can not expect that applicants will have any common base level of education. Nor can churches expect that youth workers will have any standard core courses in their education. This is not the fault of youth workers. Youth workers have few options if they are looking for a place which provides such education. However, the demands placed upon both churches and youth workers in their ministry with youth would suggest that a base level of education is necessary. In most instances, if potential youth workers want training for their intended vocations within the church they must follow a track of training for pastoral ministry with a youth speciality. Even this track of education and training presents problems. Most theological colleges and seminaries offer few courses designed to strategically educate people for work with youth.

My Own Interest In Youth Work

In mid-1993 I sat with a group of youth workers from across western Canada. I heard them repeat that they felt they were not legitimized in the eyes of their denomination. They were in a specialized work within the church but were not seen as specialists. If they wished more education, they had to follow the pastoral route. Either they became educated pastors or else they would soon be too old to do youth work. As I listened to these youth workers talk, I thought, "Imagine if the schools lost their teachers as they approached thirty unless they all became principals with a side interest in teaching!" In that moment I sensed as never before that the church and its fine pool of talented youth workers faces a continual crisis which has to be addressed. That crisis is the high turnover of youth workers in the churches. The turnover rate means that it is difficult to form youth workers as a profession group.

The church presents some very definite structural problems for anyone trying to address the problems youth workers face in being validated by the church. In my experience, churches seem to systemically devalue youth work. It appears to me that the church has an imbedded cultural notion that only young people can work with youth. Youth work is also situated as an entry level job in the ministry and youth workers will be expected to move on to more general pastoral duties. These structural problems will have to be confronted in any work done to improve the world in which youth workers work.

The church, in favouring youthfulness in youth workers, creates a conundrum. Most youth workers are young and therefore inexperienced in the very work they are engaged in, -- working with youth. It is natural that this inexperience will be reflected in their work: this fact often becomes a concern for parents, church leaders, and other older adults. However, youthfulness is also an asset because it generally allows youth workers easier identification with youth, plus the young bring the necessary energy it takes to work with youth. The answer is not necessarily to have older youth workers but to find means to ameliorate the structural and systemic problems.

One means is through formal education which addresses the lack of experience and lack of knowledge many youth workers have as they engage in youth work. A program of formal education will not address all of the structural problems but, I believe, it will address some of them. It is a common assumption that most persons entering a profession will be either young or inexperienced personally as well as professionally. One way to assure a certain level of competency in any profession is to demand a certain level of formal education to be certified in the profession. A program that leads to certification may offer a way to ameliorate the problems that I have identified.

The result of my reflections since that meeting has been my growing conviction that much of the crisis these youth workers talked to me about might be solved by creating and implementing a curriculum for the education of youth workers for churches. I know, from my position of leadership, that many churches desire educated youth workers but too few colleges or seminaries offer the necessary courses. I decided to make this problem the focus of my doctoral work. My reading of Schubert (1986) and Brubaker (1982) convinced me that I should focus my study on the interest of the learners, in this case youth workers, as the basis for designing curriculum. My study is situated within the larger process of designing a curriculum for the education of youth workers in the church.

The Purpose of the Study

The ultimate outcome of my research is to produce themes from which will eventually emerge a curriculum for the education of youth workers who would be functioning in church or community-based sites. The question which guides this research is

What are the educational needs of church youth workers? The style of the research is integral to its purpose. I felt it necessary to engage in collaborative research which involved present youth workers and their supervisors.

The purpose of this study was to answer the following questions.

1. What are the tasks and presently defined roles for youth workers in churches?
2. What knowledge, attitudes, skills, or other identifiable characteristics are necessary to perform the role of a youth worker?
3. What skills and personal characteristics do youth workers and supervisors consider most important for effective performance by youth workers?
4. How do present youth workers describe their own performance, their strengths, weaknesses, struggles, joys, and challenges?
5. What tasks are considered, by supervisors and youth workers, to be of crucial importance in the future of youth work?
6. How do youth workers and supervisors view the tasks? and Where are the commonalities and differences?
7. What knowledge do youth value most in youth workers?

The Need for the Study

The need for the research and the eventual development of a curriculum for the education of youth workers within the Baptist Union of Western Canada seemed self-evident to me after having worked with youth workers for the past seven years. It became crystallized during the 1993 meeting as youth workers articulated their concerns about not being legitimized in the eyes of their denomination. I knew that this group felt as I did, but what about others? How did other youth workers feel within my denomination?

To begin my research I decided to share my ideas and vision with others. I first discussed my ideas with the Executive Staff of the denomination and was pleased to receive enthusiastic support. I next discussed these ideas with about twenty different youth workers and pastors and continued to receive support. Besides personal support I knew that I had the financial and time resources through sabbatical and study leave. With support in place, the question now was where to begin the actual building process?

When the opportunity to conduct this research presented itself, I did not need to look far for the right place to begin the building process. I discussed my ideas with a friend, Dr. Jim Parsons, a professor in the Department of Secondary Education at the University of Alberta. He encouraged me to apply for admittance into the doctoral program through the Department. I pursued his suggestion and was accepted into the program where I found the resources, through people and programs, I needed to do my research.

An additional opportunity happened in June of 1993 when the Board of the Baptist Union of Western Canada established a Futures Directions Committee to review the program of the Baptist Leadership Training School in Calgary. As a former Principal of the School and in my then position as Director of Congregational Resources for the Baptist Union I was asked to work with this committee. This school provided a proper place to begin the development of a education program for youth workers.

The Baptist Union operates two educational institutions. One is Carey Theological College in Vancouver -- on the campus of the University of British Columbia; the other is the Baptist Leadership Training School in Calgary. This school, known as BLTS, offered a one-year, post-secondary program in leadership studies. Students go from this year into a wide variety of educational programs and career paths. Most students come into the program immediately after high school, although a few have work experience or university training before coming into the program. After more than forty years of operation, BLTS was being asked to review its entire program and suggest a new direction.

I presented several papers to the Future Directions Committee, which was formed to design a new future for the school. The first paper, which became part of the final report, suggested that BLTS move itself solidly into the center of youth work among its constituent churches in western Canada. They could do this, I suggested, by appointing a highly qualified youth specialist to their staff who could resource churches. The final report was adopted by the Board and BLTS has moved to secure such a person to its staff.

The second paper outlined the need for an education program for youth workers. The concept presented in the paper suggested a Certificate program which would be built around an undergraduate degree. Once the degree was finished there would be a one-year -- a full twelve months -- after-degree academic internship before the certificate would be granted. Such a program, once curriculum is designed, could be administered out of BLTS which would now become the Youth Ministry Centre for the Baptist Union of Western Canada. The committee and subsequently the Board moved to approve this direction and authorize the research and development of a curriculum for the program. It is significant for the reader to know that the Future Directions Committee was composed of persons representing youth workers, pastors, BLTS staff, BLTS alumni, and those involved in public education.

By the time of the final approval of the Committee's report, February 1994, my proposal had been reviewed by the Future Direction's committee, The Board of the Baptist Leadership Training School, the Board of the Baptist Union, as well as the Executive staff of the Baptist Union. The persons represented on these boards and committees reflect a wide body of opinion and perspective, including those from the academic community. Therefore, I have felt safe to conclude that the study has considerable significance for those it is intended to serve. Several other academic institutions and church groups have heard about the possible research and have contacted me, expressing keen interest and support.

Two of these institutions in particular, Carey Theological College in Vancouver and Edmonton Baptist Seminary in Edmonton, have been highly supportive of my research and have engaged me in interaction with them at various levels, including curriculum committees, boards of administration, and in the classroom. As I have designed my research I have collaborated with a fine group of colleagues as well as students and youth workers on the research. This collaboration has given even greater focus and impetus to my research and my desire to design a curriculum to educate youth workers that is based on the regularities that are revealed in the actual experience of being a youth worker.

Delimitations

The research was done only within the churches of the Baptist Union of Western Canada. This particular delimitation suggested a second delimitation. The research was bounded geographically to the region of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, British

Columbia, and the Territories. The research involved present youth workers and supervisors within these boundaries. Finally, I was the sole researcher and, therefore, the research was necessarily confined to my capacity to do the research.

Limitations

The research was only done with churches and related agencies. The research findings only relate to this context. However, while the findings may not be specifically generalizable to other situations where youth workers may be employed, I do assume some transferability and dependability from the findings because my analysis was conducted in a setting similar to, and representative of, the universe to which I wish to generalize. Also, I assume that any other researcher would come to similar conclusions based upon the data analyzed.

The research was not done with a variety of church groups but only within the churches of the Baptist Union of Western Canada. Although many of the research findings probably can be generalized to other church situations, there are exceptions where it cannot be generalized even in a church context. These exceptions occur in church groups who have particular needs, based not so much upon the needs of youth but upon their own need to address certain subject matters with youth. Some churches have programs to educate their youth in their particular doctrine, their particular history, and their particular view of mission. These churches may make some use of my research. However, as a researcher, I can not assume that my research is necessarily generalizable to these particular situations.

Since the research was conducted solely within churches, the matter of spiritual formation is of prime interest. Spiritual formation means the importance of Christian belief and faith and the development of the same in the lives of youth. This factor would not be of interest or of value to all persons interested in the education of youth workers. Finally one purpose of the research was the development of a written curriculum. I have presented this curriculum in Appendix A in the form of course syllabi.

Assumptions

My first assumption was that my research was important and necessary. I tested my ideas on the Youth Committee and the Board of the Baptist Union of Western Canada and in discussion with several academics in seminaries. All agreed that such research was necessary. Several church-related academic institutions in Western Canada expressed interest in having a program of studies to educate youth workers but needed the foundational research to inform the curriculum design. My assumption that the research was valuable was strengthened in my various conversations and interviews.

My second assumption was that any curriculum designed to educate youth workers, if based upon robust research, would improve the comfort level, confidence, competence, and ultimately the credibility of youth leaders employed by churches. At present few youth workers, hired by churches, have been educated specifically for the tasks they are required to perform. Much on-the-job training occurs along with considerable grief and moderately high turnover of people in these positions. In most cases, and I believed the research would support this assumption, the main hiring criteria are the abilities to work well in a relational manner with youth and to like youth. These are important and necessary factors; but, in themselves, they may not be good indicators of one's ability to work competently with youth.

My third assumption was that the experience of those currently in practice of Christian youth work should provide the bases that guide curriculum development. It was not my intent to challenge the nature of their current practice or to work towards the creation of a curriculum that would transform existing practice. However, I am aware that such things sometimes happen during the actual process of curriculum development.

Definition of Terms

The following terms were used in the study and are defined as follows:

Youth Worker: refers to any one who works with primarily teenage young people as a program leader, counsellor, teacher, or music leader. The term is also, for the purposes of this research, limited to the context of the church.

Local Church: refers to any individual church with its own staff, boards, and committees.

Baptist Union of Western Canada: refers to the denomination of churches throughout the four western Canadian provinces and territories who have associated together for mission and ministry. It constitutes 177 churches in its membership.

Youth Committee: refers to the body with the Baptist Union of Western Canada which, by its representative membership from churches across Western Canada, supervises youth work in the churches of the parent denomination.

Baptist Leadership Training School: refers to the lay leadership training school operated by the Baptist Union of Western Canada. The school, situated in Calgary, offers a one-year leadership training program for Christian youth at a post-secondary level.

Certificate Program: refers to the name of the program of studies for the education of youth workers. Upon completion of their studies, participants would receive a Certificate in Youth Leadership.

Mentor: refers to any person who occupies an academic and supervisory position in relationship to those studying to be youth leaders.

Spiritual Formation: refers to the belief and faith and the development of such belief and faith in a person's life.

Belief: refers to the acceptance of and conviction of a certain body of tenets as true.

Faith: Although often used synonymously with belief, it here refers to a trusting acceptance of God's will.

The Relational Factor in Research

In the chapters to come I situate my own study within related literature. Next I present a formal research design. In addition, another component has been implicit in the preceding pages which I wish to make explicit here. This component has to do with the people who are part of this study and my relationship, as a researcher, to those people.

Something quite special occurred early in my research *journey* which even now, as I write, remains and grows. The "something" I refer to has to do with the youth workers I have encountered and have interacted with and who wished to be part of the research process. The fact that the desire to improve their lives was the intended focus of the research has created a sense of affirmation for them. At first I basked in the encouragement that they gave me. However, the more I interacted with them the more I realized that I was not merely a recipient but, in a sense, an imparter of something. I did not do the imparting alone. This latter statement points to an important discovery for me.

I believe I imparted to these youth workers a sense of importance and hope. Their work and their ideas are important enough to merit doctoral research. These same people have felt unrecognized and not legitimized by their denominations. Furthermore, I have not been alone in imparting this sense of importance and hope. As I shared with some what it means to appear before a panel of academics and defend proposed research, I was sharing a moment in time which, I assume, is exciting, intimidating, and nerve-wracking for most doctoral students. What they received in the "text" of my story was a reading different than mine. They read both that I was willing to do the research and expend the time and resources; they also read that a panel of academics at an important university thought it was worth doing as well. They read the text very personally.

As I reflect on this phenomenon I see that research operates at two very crucial levels with humans. It has its formal level of structured interviews, triangulation, controls, statistics, quantifiable data, and generalizable findings. All these matters concern some type of interaction between the researcher and those involved in the research as subjects. But another level is quite beyond the control of the researcher, and that is the informal or relational level. At this level, persons co-operating with the researcher read importance not only in the subject matter of the research but in themselves as a focus of research. They also read hope in the text of the research being done. From my experience as a pastor, I know that this also happens in medical research where people gain hope that a cure will be found for some particular disease.

I was unprepared for this personal and relational factor. As a researcher, I conduct my research process in what, I hope, is a very disciplined and formalized manner. There are rules to follow even as one writes. The discipline demands great care and diligence. This world of discipline has become my lived experience as a researcher. In my case, conducting research which will inform the design of a curriculum for the education of youth workers has caused me to become disciplined, focused, and concerned about following the rules and procedures of good research. The lived experience of the researcher meets the lived experience of others who hopefully can benefit from the research.

The participants in the process have a very different lived experience, one not governed by rules or disciplines of research. Their lived experience now has a spotlight on it. Someone is paying attention. Maybe some problems will be solved and life will be better.

Diehl (1991) says, "The world aches for good listeners" (p. 68). His point is that being present among people as a listener is a powerful means of connecting with them. Researchers assume the position of a careful listener. It is not my intent to analyze the whys of the relational dynamic but to make its occurrence explicit. I make it explicit for three reasons. First, just as the curriculum-as-planned changes when students enter the classroom, the research-as-proposed changes as researcher and participants interact. It might not change in any formal way, but it changes. The formal is impacted by the informal. The second reason for making the relational dynamic explicit acknowledges that the researcher and the participants impact each other's lives. Before the research begins, the researcher demonstrates to the academic examining council the significance and importance of the research. This event follows formal rules and expectations. The researcher then begins the research confident that the research is significant and important. But research importance takes on a very different feel when participants communicate that the research is personally important to them. The formal approval of a committee gives confidence, but the approval of participants gives encouragement.

Encouragement energizes a person, even a researcher. Research of this nature is not done purely to create and construct new knowledge. It is being done for people. The research has become qualitatively different. This change is the third reason I wish to make explicit the relational dynamics in research. Like all researchers I hope my research contributes to the construction of new knowledge according to the rules of excellence. I also hope it reveals valuable insights about the vocation and the people who do the work of youth workers. But in true collaborative fashion it is no longer my research but theirs-ours. There is a relationship in what follows. I hope that the research now represented in this dissertation keeps faith with the relational bonds of hope that exist between me, as a researcher, and the participants of this study.

Participant Involvement in Designing Research

I have been concerned from the beginning that the research I have done and the curriculum I have begun to design be marked by collaboration, especially with youth workers. It is important to work with and receive the opinions of those close to the action. I was struck by a survey done by the Carnegie Foundation. The survey included twenty-two thousand public school teachers in the United States. It discovered that one-third had no say in shaping the curriculum they were using. When it came to school policies affecting students, almost two-thirds reported that they were never asked for an opinion (Boyett and Conn, 1991, p. 275). Teachers are close to students and need to influence curriculum and school policies affecting students. The same applies to youth workers who are close to youth. They need to influence any curriculum that purports to increase their ability to work with youth.

My bias is, therefore, towards collaboration in research and curriculum design. This bias has, of course, influenced my own reading and the research design revealed in the following chapters.

Summary

Youth are often seen by adults in mass, and not as individuals. They are often seen by the media as a market group to be manipulated. Adults find it easier to leave youth in their culture than to engage this "strange" group. However, youth need older adults, such as parents, teachers, and youth workers as companions.

In recent years, churches have increased their interest in youth. Many churches have hired youth workers. The hiring of youth workers has revealed a problem of education. There is a lack of a standard core curriculum for the education of youth workers. The Baptist Union of Western Canada through its Credentials Committee specifies educational criteria for pastors who desire to be ordained and credentialled. There is no similar criteria for youth workers. The demands of the task faced by youth workers suggest that a curriculum is necessary. The research makes clear that youth workers will be expected to be counsellors. However, no provision is made that the counselling of youth would be part of any formal education they might have participated in prior or during their involvement as a youth worker. In my position as Executive Minister of the Baptist Union of Western Canada, I know that few curricula exist and many of those which do exist are not easily accessible to youth workers. My response to this problem has been to conduct research that would eventually help to design a curriculum for the education of youth workers. Collaboration with youth workers has been important in my research.

Chapter 2

Building The Foundation For A Curriculum

Introduction

7

Chapter two tells the story of my search for literature related to my research needs. To begin thinking about the educational needs of church youth workers, I turned to literature in three main areas: (1) curriculum design theory most relevant to church youth workers, with emphases on the learner, praxis and critical reflection, knowledge (what is worth knowing), and life-experience learning; (2) the role of the youth worker; and (3) understanding the world of youth, with an emphasis on popular culture.

First, I believed that this study, situated within the larger project of developing a curriculum for church youth workers, required that I understand some fundamental concepts of curriculum. I found particular relevance in conceptualization of praxis and critical reflection in curriculum development. Second, from my own past work and conversations with youth workers, I had previously concluded that their role embraced leadership and the task of building a collegial community within church contexts. I wanted to examine some theoretical perspectives of these elements. Third, I knew from experience that youth workers' responsibilities demanded some knowledge about youth and the world in which youth live. I explored literature in adolescent development and popular culture as preparation for my discussions with youth workers about the adolescent worlds in which their practice was immersed.

Curriculum: The Learner

Working toward the design of a curriculum which has few prototypes is a challenging task. Where does one go for help in designing curriculum to educate youth workers for the church when the main problem is the lack of such a curriculum? As a member of the Board of Management at Carey Theological College and in my work as Executive Minister of the Baptist Union of Western Canada, I frequently work with Canadian seminaries. Although an emerging number of colleges and seminaries are beginning to offer courses and programs for youth workers, many more offer only a few courses and no programs for the education of youth workers. Much of the related literature on curriculum development and design has the K to 12 school as its context.

Schultz and Schultz (1993) help churches apply needs and trends in public education to Christian education. They are concerned about the trend in public education towards becoming preoccupied with uniform, standardized tests because this trend works against what for them is the goal of education in both a secular and Christian context, namely, "to help prepare kids for the real world and inspire them to become lifelong learners" (p.16).

The Schultzes favour an approach to curriculum which applies in both the public setting and the church context. Their research recommends the following for Christian educators:

1. Remember the goal.
2. Stress learning over teaching.
3. Zero in on what's most important.

4. Emphasize understanding.
5. Promote thinking.
6. Use active learning.
7. Use interactive learning. (p. 171).

Their conviction, based upon observations largely limited to public schools, is that these seven actions ought to be incorporated into curriculum, especially in the church.

Because youth workers work with churches, I believe their learning should be site-based in the churches and the community. Teaching in a community or church is not the same as teaching in a classroom. As an educator situated in the church, I felt like an outsider reading the works of people who spoke to those situated within schools. Encountering William Schubert's (1986) work helped me to shed my concept of myself as an outsider.

He spoke to my interests just as I wanted to address the interest of youth workers in my curriculum design. Many educators identified in this section addressed the need to engage in a collaborative style in curriculum design. Others demonstrated the importance of a praxis approach when designing curriculum. Some, like Groome, addressed the particular needs of Christian religious educators like me.

Schubert, in his text Curriculum Perspective, Paradigm, and Possibility , speaks of human service professionals. These people, like me, teach in non-school institutions or settings. Schubert even names a few of these settings (churches, scouting, youth clubs, and so on). He says, "These educators plan programs to influence the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values of others; therefore, they are curriculum developers" (1986, p.5).

Schubert recognizes that educators live in places other than schools. The conversation or dialogue that any teacher and student engage in is educational and, necessarily, includes issues of curriculum and instruction. All educators must begin with learner's interests and, only then, move to disciplines of knowledge. The very notion of beginning with learner's interests as the base to designing curriculum is what I wished to do in this research project.

Curriculum: Praxis and Critical Reflection

Groome (1981) suggests that all persons are pilgrims in time. He is concerned that humans learn to reflect about how they know what they know. Because he writes specifically in the context of Christian religious education, I focus intently on what he says. The curriculum for youth workers that will eventually develop from this research will do so in a Christian context. For the Christian, Groome confirms that a praxial way of knowing is best. This means that Christians should always reflect upon what they are doing and, in the process, develop theory which influences their practice.

In chapter ten of his book Christian Religious Education: Sharing Our Story and Vision, Groome identifies five pedagogical movements which have emerged in his use of a shared praxis aproach in education (1980, p.207). Groome says that "The movements can be put into operation by a variety of teaching methods, and many different pedagogical techniques can be used within each movement" (1980, p.208).

The first movement asks participants to name their present action in response to the topic under review. Present action has a very definite meaning for Groome: "It includes what we are doing physically, emotionally, intellectually, and spiritually as we live on personal, interpersonal, and social levels" (1980, p.208). What is important is that persons involved give personal statements on the present action and not statements of *theoria* based upon what others say. The educator is interested in helping learners make explicit their own knowing which comes from their engagement with the world. Groome says that "This movement is where the shift from a *theoria* to a praxis way of knowing begins" (1980, p.210).

In the second movement the concern is that critical reflection take place. We want to discern our present action to see both the obvious and the not so obvious about why we do what we do. Groome says that "In this the movement attempts to help participants come to a consciousness of the social conditioning, norms, assumptions, and the like that are embodied in their present action" (1980, p.211). The critical reflection in this movement also looks ahead to what the consequences of present action might be or what we would want them to be. Groome calls this the vision (1980, p.211). Many persons at this point are faced with discrepancies between what is and how they want things to be. Groome says that "Any pedagogical strategy or teaching model which can promote such reflection and dialogue is appropriate for this second movement" (1980, p.213).

The third movement is the presentation of the Christian community's story and vision. Story and vision are used as metaphors to represent the faith tradition of the Christian community and the lived response to the story. The presentation of the story and vision can use a variety of teaching techniques. The point is to help persons involved discover the story and vision for themselves.

"The fourth movement is a critique of the Story in light of the stories and a critique of the participants' present stories in light of the past Story" (1980, p.217).

"The intention for the fifth movement is to critique the visions embodied in our present action in the light of the Vision of God's Kingdom..." (1980, p.220). Such a critique is intended to help us decide upon future actions as a response to the Vision.

Anyone wishing to use a praxis approach, not only in the design of curriculum but also in the courses offered, will find that Groome offers a clear approach for Christian educators. His five pedagogical movements are at the very core of his approach to education.

Groome also implies that building a curriculum based on praxis takes time, because such a curriculum can not be developed in a linear fashion. Theory no more informs practice than practice informs theory. Both processes happen simultaneously and cannot be separated. Critical reflection is important for a praxis way of knowing, and it takes time. Groome (1981) also emphasizes that reflection must be encouraged in childhood and developed qualitatively in adolescence.

What Groome describes is important for curriculum design in two senses. It is important, for example, that youth workers are engaged in critical reflection in the particular courses offered in the curriculum. It is also important that they understand that critical reflection is important for the youth they work with in the every-day practice of youth work. Therefore, youth workers must not only be engaged in critical reflection but must be educated in methods of assisting others to reflect critically upon their lived experience.

Groome also adds another component to the development of curriculum in a community context. He describes his experience and concept of shared praxis. This praxis approach to curriculum is shared with a group of learners. Praxis is the notion that we cannot easily separate theory and practice. The two are joined in a continual process of action-reflection-action. In shared praxis a group reflects critically upon its learning and lived experience and new practice and theory are formed. I will refer to the shared praxis approach in the chapter on research design and methods because it is important to my own research.

Grundy (1987) echoes Groome's ideas and strongly favours praxis. She points out that a praxis way of knowing engages the student as an active, and not a passive, recipient of knowledge. She points out that Freire's "problem-posing" education is a praxis approach. Such an approach means that students and teacher confront real problems of their existence and not pseudo-problems posed by a teacher in a classroom.

Grundy (1987), using a praxis approach, believes that curriculum is not a set of plans to be implemented with all the predetermined objectives described. Curriculum development becomes an active process where planning, acting, and evaluating are all reciprocally related and integrated in the process. Through the act of learning, students become active participants in the construction of their own knowledge. The knowledge they create cannot be predetermined anymore than one can predetermine an experience for another. Therefore, according to Grundy, a most important aspect of the curriculum will be the promotion of a critical consciousness (1987, p.125).

Schubert (1986) adds that curriculum is central to the maturing process of the human race. The development of a critical consciousness is vital to our maturing as persons. Eisner and Vallance (1993) describe curriculum as a consummatory experience. This curriculum is value-saturated, recognizes personal purpose, and seeks personal integration. It is a means for helping individuals discuss things for themselves. Finally, Unruh and Unruh (1984) share Doll's (1989) concern that curriculum design demands careful thought. Careful thought encourages concern about the effect of the curriculum on those it seeks to serve. Individuals become the prime concern of the curriculum and objectives, especially behavioural objectives, assume a secondary role. The work of Groome and Freire suggests that praxis must take place in the real world of lived experience and not a hypothetical school-based world.

My own praxis helps me understand their work. I did not start out with a focus on praxis; but, in reflection with others, I began to see how the curriculum I eventually wished to design with others needed to develop. Although I began with the frustration that the context of my work was not in a school, I realized that my study was about a community of learners, where teachers and students teach one another.

Curriculum: What Is Worth Knowing?

Although the question "What is worth knowing?" is a standard question for the development of curriculum, I have included it here because I believe it is crucial for my own work. The church will have its own notion, in many instances, about what youth ought to know about such matters as faith and the scriptures. For the youth worker and the curriculum this knowledge is valuable. Richards (1972) was concerned about renewal in churches, particularly with regard to youth ministry. Although his ideas are now dated, his approach is important to note. Richards was breaking ground by emphasizing the importance of the values of youth and youth culture.

In the 1990s the culture of many churches and the culture of youth do not mix easily. Youth in society and in churches are neither the dominant nor the ruling group. The pop culture they develop is often not appreciated by the dominate group. If, however, the culture does become appreciated, the dominant group assimilates the practice as its own. The changing role of music in worship suggests how such an assimilation takes place. Youth workers who do not see the importance of learning the values of youth or how youth create their own culture will not go far in their work with youth.

Armstrong (1989) demonstrates that how we define curriculum determines what knowledge we value. He suggests that, if curriculum is only the planned activity or interactions among teachers and students, then only external matters which can be demonstrated by behaviour are valued. Some would broaden the definition of curriculum by saying that curriculum encompasses all the experiences offered to learners. But this definition is challenged by those who say that you cannot offer experiences -- only situations where it is possible for the learner to have an experience. I favour a definition of curriculum which encompasses both the planned, for some interactions are planned, and the unplanned. The history and knowledge which the individual, teacher, or student brings to the situation is valuable. No one comes empty-handed to any learning situation. People bring their society, their homes, their inner lives, their developmental needs, and their values to any educational situation. All these matters are part of the curriculum and are valued knowledge.

Davis (1976) sees learning to think in synthesis as valuable and something which reveals valuable knowledge. He notes that Charity James claims schooling should be more like living. James highlights certain activities which permit the learning of knowledge in various ways. Enquiry through exploration, experiment, or explanation produces valuable knowledge. The act of making, inventing, designing, or maintaining something produces valuable knowledge. Conversation and dialogue also produces valuable knowledge. This knowledge is lost or not gained if the teacher is a mere technician or lecturer conveying knowledge as the context of curriculum. Common (1991) sees that understandings are the proper goal of teaching. Understandings, however, are limited by what we determine is worthwhile knowledge. She claims that the most complicated part of the curriculum design is the determination of what is worthwhile.

Kelly (1986) contrasts a rationalist perspective of knowledge, which sees education as transmission, and a constructivist perspective that sees knowledge as created by learners. One's epistemology influences the curriculum and what one values as knowledge. If one favours a constructivist view, curriculum is designed as a series of processes whereby knowledge can be created through activity. Further to epistemology, Doll (1989) claims that curriculum developers need to give careful attention to their beliefs about people. This attention also determines what knowledge we value. Do we see people as individualized, or do we commodify them and look for standard and predictable behaviours?

There is little doubt that curriculum design is greatly affected by developers' views of worthwhile knowledge. Their view, in turn, is affected by their epistemology, their view of people, their basic beliefs, and especially their ontological belief.

The church, as a context, has already determined that ethical and spiritual values are worth developing. Those who do come from this perspective of the church [Fassel and Schaef (1988), Greenleaf (1977), Bibby and Posterski (1992), and Mitchell (1992)] all see such knowledge as very valuable.

Curriculum: Developed from Life Experience Learning

Clarke and Merriam (1993) conducted a qualitative study, as part of a much larger research project, to examine the underlying structure of the significance of life-experience learning. Their study and subsequent findings have helped me design my research. Clarke and Merriam were seeking to answer the question, Why do some experiences have a greater impact on us than others? They saw this question of what makes learning significant as the focus of their study (p.129). Clarke and Merriam's study clearly shows the importance of informal learning situations in the development of knowledge in adult learners and confirms what I hoped to discover in my own research.

Clarke and Merriam noted that "When we examined the learning experiences listed by our respondents, we noticed that the overwhelming majority of these were not experiences of formal education but rather could be categorized as informal or life experience learning." (p.133). The findings were even more surprising in that most of the

405 respondents were engaged in continuing education programmes. The study seems to suggest that life experiences may be the "predominant and most valued form of learning in adulthood" (p.133).

It is one thing to note the phenomenon and data supporting the assertion that life experience is the most valued form of learning for adults. But, how does this finding shape the design of curriculum? Clarke and Merriam noted some of the inner structures which helped make life experiences significant for learners. They discovered that life experience must personally affect the learner and must be subjectively valued by the learner. A learning experience is subjectively valued when a learner names its importance in his or her life. The learner was personally affected when there was an expansion of skills and abilities, sense of self, or life perspective. The learning was also significant if it precipitated a transformation that involved the whole person. (p.133).

Clarke and Merriam also noted that "For learning to occur, the experience must be attended to and reflected upon" (p.139). In addition, if the experience is attended to and reflected on, it can result in learning which is significant or non-significant. The following Table demonstrates Clarke and Merriam's findings.

These findings are, I believe, relevant to my own research with youth workers, who told me during interviews that they preferred a combination of on-site learning, education that uses both the personal experiences of every-day lived-experience, and more formalized classroom education. My interviews with youth workers asked them to reflect upon life experience as the site for significant learning.

Table: 1

Issues which make learning significant.

EXPERIENCE

learning (experience attended to and reflected on)	non learning (experience not attended to)
non-significant (can involve expansion but is not subjectively	significant (subjectively valued) has personal impact re: expansion or transformation)

The Role of Youth Workers

The role of church youth workers can be partly understood as becoming leaders of youth. There is a vast quantity of literature available dealing with various aspects of leadership. Here I briefly summarize theories of servant leadership, situational leadership, and the development of leadership-- three concepts which I believe are helpful in examining the role of the church youth worker as leader.

Barth writes that a "servant-leader" leads others by serving them (1990, p.143). Such a person is vital, Barth states, in developing a community of learners. Greenleaf (1977) also emphasizes the importance of a "servant-leader" in any organization, including educational institutions and the church. Like Barth, Greenleaf states that relationships within a learning community are crucial. This means that faculty or staff must have a loyalty first to students and one another rather than to their discipline and own reputation (1977, p.182). He implies that the matter of developing collegiality is vital in education. For Greenleaf, all learning involves risk and adventure. Humans tend to take bigger risks and venture more when they are supported by collegial relationships. Greenleaf notes two crucial skills, for learners and servant-leaders of learners. The first skill is learning to make one's way in an ambiguous world. The second skill is being able to venture into the unknown with unanswered questions (1977, pp.192,193).

Hersey's (1984) concept of situational leadership holds that these skills are learned in the situation; they cannot be learned prior to entering the situation. The skills form part of the body of knowledge worth knowing but best gained through being involved in the real world of lived experiences. The situation, as a context for leadership, is a vital part of curriculum development. Hersey (1984) states that the situation contributes to one's ability or inability to lead. Different situations demand different skills and abilities from those who lead. There is no standardized package of skills labeled "leadership" that, when mastered, can be applied in every situation. Therefore leadership, or our own ability or inability to lead, is best discovered in the situation which confronts us.

DePree (1989) echoes Hersey's claims. He says that "Leadership is much more an art, a belief, a condition of the heart, then a set of things to do" (p.148). He argues that this essence of leadership is best expressed in its practice, which highlights certain responsibilities of leadership. One responsibility is the development of other leaders. This is accomplished by identifying, developing, and nurturing these new leaders (p.14). I see such nurturing as vital for youth workers. As they are being developed and nurtured as leaders, they have responsibility to develop and nurture leadership among the youth they serve.

Bennis (1989) also makes a case for the importance of the situation in relationship to leadership. He argues that leadership is developed and understood in the real world of practice. He is concerned that educators learn to deal with people and things as they really exist in their natural environment. He points to business graduates who have a terrible time functioning with the ambiguities of the real world. Once the environment changes from what they learned in classroom case studies, they become lost and confounded.

For youth workers, the highly diverse situations of practice likely offer many uncertainties and ambiguities. However, specific issues related to their own contexts, and the ways in which their sense of servanthood and leadership develop in these contexts, can only be learned by listening to their own experiences.

The Role of Youth Workers: Church Contexts

The youth workers who are the focus of my study all are either working within a church context or directly related to the church by working in a camp owned by churches. Therefore the church context is often reflected in their comments and it is also the site of their practice. An understanding of the church as a context for youth work is important in understanding the youth worker's role.

The youth worker's represented in this study are all related to Baptist churches. Each Baptist church is autonomous, which means it governs its own affairs on a local basis and not from a denominational headquarters. Staff of the church are solely responsible to the church and its governing board. The parents of the youth are often members of the church and some may also be members of the governing board. Therefore, the youth worker's relationship to supervisors and parents can be complex and confused at times.

The formal expectations of youth workers through job descriptions and supervisory expectations may often be countered with parental expectations which may not always support the formal expectations. Youth workers in churches often live in a world of conflicting expectations about their roles and their performance within the roles. If churches are overly informal in the way they hire and supervise youth workers, such as job descriptions which lack good detailed expectations, youth workers are often left in vulnerable positions when asked to defend their approach to their work against the expectations of parents. As I was designing my research I heard two different denominational executives of Baptist denominations state that the average tenure for youth workers in their denominations was less than three years. Such a state reflects an unstable job environment for church situated youth workers.

Churches who hire youth workers often hire them to part-time positions. As a result, youth workers often spend the other part of their time in studies or with another job. Many youth worker positions do not pay well and benefits are not included. I have often heard youth workers reflect that their part-time status gives them little say in staff meetings or at meetings of boards or committees who supervise their work.

One lament I have heard more than any other from youth workers is their wish that the senior pastor knew how to lead a team. Many youth workers reflect that their senior pastors are not good supervisors. In most Baptist churches the senior pastor is expected to supervise other staff. The abilities of the senior pastor are very important in the life of the youth worker.

Many youth workers I have met have a real desire to work with youth both within their church and the community. This desire brings them, at times, into conflictual relationships with church leaders and parents of youth within the church. Parents of youth within the church often want their youth to be taught the Bible and Christian teachings. Youth who are not a part of the church often are not interested in a Bible Study. They might want to be involved in the youth activities of a church youth group and might relate well with the youth worker at the church, but they want other activities. I have often heard youth workers reflect the tensions of mixing church youth with youth not related to the church and the challenge of finding a balance in their programs.

Finally, most churches reflect a cross-section of generations. Some might reflect more of one than of others but generally churches favour having many generations within their congregational mix. Sometimes these generations clash, especially around cultural issues such as music. Historically churches have not reflected contemporary music in their worship. More and more young people and young adults are demanding contemporary styles of worship which includes music which speaks to a younger generation. Youth workers find themselves in the middle of these clashes and are often expected to be the interpreters of one generation to another.

I have reflected the vulnerable state of youth workers in the churches because much of the context puts youth workers in a vulnerable position. This situation, plus the conviction that churches need youth workers, has prompted me to conduct my study in the hope that I might help make the situation more stable by increasing the status of the youth worker as an educated specialist who is able to help the church, youth, and parents live in a rich coexistence.

Understanding the World of Youth: Adolescent Needs

It may be reasonably assumed that youth workers who do not understand adolescents, or do not care to understand them, will not remain youth workers long. Armstrong (1989) states that patterns of the learners' physiological, emotional, and intellectual development ought to be studied so one can identify needs which can be addressed in a curriculum. The youth worker needs to understand the adolescent both as a person and as someone undergoing a developmental process. The latter is not meant to standardize adolescents but merely to sensitize the youth worker to factors which impact the lives of most youth.

Selman (1990) pinpoints a common need among adolescents. He sees the need for friendship as crucial; but, more than that, he sees the need to help adolescents understand what it means to become and be a better friend. Bibby and Posterski's (1985) massive study of youth in Canada is not only a great resource of general information about youth but reveals that relationships are the primary source of happiness for teens. Their study offers advice to many organizations, including the church. For the church they see three challenges:

1. How to be authoritative without being authoritarian.
2. Finding ways to provide support without creating a subculture.

3. How to focus on transcendence without trivializing life.

Posterski (1985) produced a book called Friendship based upon the study he and Bibby conducted. He felt that the topic was so crucial that it merited a separate book aimed at churches. Bibby and Posterski (1992) produced a second book based upon a 1992 study of youth across Canada. The second study reports that youth are "in motion" and makes a useful comparison to the 1985 study. The 1992 study provides an important source of current attitudes and values generally held among youth in Canada. A cautionary note needs to be sounded, however. One should not assume that a wide-ranging study defines any particular youth profile. Youth workers must always keep in mind that the youth they are working with are individuals.

In 1992 Mitchell also produced a book on adolescence based upon work with Canadian youth. Mitchell's work views the development of adolescents in terms of their search for selfhood and identity. He approaches the world of adolescence narrowly, as an educational psychologist and not as a social researcher, such as Bibby, looking at the broad scope. Bibby and Posterski speak of friendship as of prime importance for youth; Mitchell looks more closely at the particular dynamics of adolescent friendships. Although Bibby and Posterski can claim that relationships are the primary source of happiness for teens Mitchell sees, with those relationships, developmental needs which suggest that adolescents often need help in this area of their lived experience.

Understanding the World of Youth: Adolescent Development

Mitchell (1979) represents adolescence in three developmental phases. He organizes his work around three phases of adolescence. Phase 1, early-adolescent or child-adolescence, is followed by the middle-adolescence period or merely adolescence. These are followed by late-adolescence or adult-adolescence. These categories are helpful because they mark adolescence not only as a transition period from childhood to adulthood but note developmental stages within adolescence.

Mitchell makes an important observation when he states, "In many respects middle and late adolescents are young adults capable of engaging in a variety of roles basically reserved for adults" (p. 2). Although moving towards adulthood, adolescents have not fully arrived even though they may appear to be fully adult. Mitchell alludes to this phenomenon of not being stabilized in an adult role when he says,

> At the same time, however, adolescents have within them much of the child. They have strong feelings of dependency upon parents and authority figures. Adolescents will, on occasion, display immature and regressive behaviour. They seem to straddle the fence between young adulthood and late childhood, somehow assuming that whenever their balance takes them in one direction others will (and should) adjust to their changing posture (p.5).

In part, the adolescent dilemma of being neither adult nor child but in-between presents the greatest challenge to family, educators, and youth workers. Here are persons, all of them young, on a journey whose destination is being fully adult. The destination is largely unknown to them, when they begin the journey, except by vicarious means through older adults. Their journey is also marked by departures and arrivals. They are continually greeting the new while bidding farewell to the past. This is taking place in their bodies, their minds, their social roles, and in their emotions.

Kaplan (1984) articulates the sense of departure so much a part of adolescence. There are times in adolescence when a young person revisits the past but now with, as Mitchell alluded, an adult capacity mentally. Kaplan says,

> When the past becomes available again in the present it can be transformed and reinterpreted. Adolescence provides the possibility of selecting what is to be continued and what is to remain in the past. The adolescent revision helps to assure that adult existence will not be consumed by repeating the past (p.99).

Kaplan and others imply that the revision can also be missed in adolescence, which then becomes problematic for the adult.

Kaplan further states that "The purpose of adolescence is to revise the past, not to obliterate it..."(p.325). Adolescence is a transformational period, a time to relate one's own passion to the larger passions of family and community. On a more personal level, the adolescent is wondering where she/he fits in the larger society. Where in the larger scope of things is there room for the expression of personal passion and ambition?

Adolescence is a particularly vulnerable time in an individual's life journey. It is a time which brings more turmoil to some than to others. The journey from childhood to adulthood is marked with many hazards. Adult companions, like youth who bring support, counsel, and friendship, can be a welcome addition to any journey.

Mitchell (1996) in Adolescent Vulnerability addresses vulnerability in adolescence. He says, "It is the moral responsibility of adults to assist youth in negotiating the minefield adolescence has become in the past few decades" (p.viii).

Mitchell catches the precariousness of adolescence. A sense of stability in adult life depends on a good transformation in adolescence. However, many factors interfere with a transformation taking place in adolescence.

A curriculum which seeks to develop church youth workers is, in part, a response to the call to help adolescents in the transformational process. Mitchell outlines clearly what he sees as the "at risk" issues of adolescents which need to be addressed by those who work with adolescents: (p.xv)

Table: 2

At risk issues for adolescents.

- Young people easily become less than they could be, and their great potential is easily eroded and diminished.

- Their natural zest for life can shift into indifference and scorn, and their eagerness to contribute to their family and their society can be suffocated by the impulse to negate and to destroy.

- Their capacity for clear thought is easily contaminated by beclouded, egocentrified thought.

- Their natural and wholesome self-ish-ness can deteriorate into chronic, narcissistic selfishness.

- They have, without active assistance from adults and peers, a limited ability to prevent pregnancy.

- Especially during early-and middle-adolescence, their ability to accurately envision long-term consequences is weak and underdeveloped.

- In sum, without positive, constructive, and loving intervention, they are easily transported into a downward spiral in their behavior and their sociability.

Understanding the World of Youth: Popular Culture

Another important area concerning adolescents is the area of popular culture. Popular culture has an impact upon adolescent development, risk factors, and the understanding of adolescents by older adults, such as parents, teachers, and youth workers.

Schultze et al. (1991), in the work Dancing in the Dark: Youth, Popular Culture, and the Electronic Media, address this issue in some depth. This group of scholars worked in community to research and produce this book. They argue, out of their research, that "youth are who they are in no small measure because of how adults view them, adolescence is implicitly defined by adult-run media, churches, and schools" (p.2). They are concerned about what happens when adults, especially parents, find it troublesome relating to or understanding youth. These adults often turn to the media, churches, or schools to help them understand the youth. This forms a cycle that is neither helpful nor produces genuine understanding.

There is a tension between youth involvement in their own culture and being nurtured by older adults who are not a part of that culture. This tension has profound implications for the education of youth. For example, "Instead of creatively involving youth in adult tasks and responsibilities parents often find it much easier and less time-consuming to turn their children loose in adolescent culture" (p. 51). This practice works against the maturation of youth. Interaction with older adults is necessary in the maturation process, as Mitchell (1996) suggests.

Working against the educational process of the adolescent maturation is not merely limited to parents and other adults. It is also encouraged by many of our institutions, namely, the church.

> Given the fact that generational discontinuity is a major part of the 'youth problem' the creation of all kinds of youth-specific institutions cannot be seen as any solution. In fact, youth organizations, even those sponsored by churches, largely serve corporate North America by accentuating the various trends of teen culture and thereby increasing market segmentation (p.91)

Youth need adult contact to engage in the maturation process. The issues are not solely excluded to psychological developmental but also relate to a culture which creates both difficulties and opportunities for youth. Youth themselves complain that adults, especially parents, do not spend time with them, share their interests, or talk with them (p. 62).

My hope would be that I could eventually design curriculum for youth workers that, as they are engaged in study and learning, they would have a clear sense that this curriculum "fits" their need. Through the curriculum they can "represent" themselves and their real world while at the same time they can experience a maturation of themselves as persons and their knowledge of their world. People are important to this process and not just ideas or materials. Naylor and Willimon (1995) argue that the curriculum reform that best ensures success is that a college or university has good people teaching its courses. Institutions must also attract students who desire to learn and be nurtured in a learning community. They conclude that "The people are the curriculum" (p. 127). Furthermore, they encounter many students willing to listen to and interact with older adults, students who are eager for communal and human interaction.

Together Is The Way To Build Curriculum

There is a collegiality among curriculum builders, regardless of setting. Barth (1990), outlines his work with schools and his concern about collegiality among educators. His aim, it seems, is to renew relationships within schools among leaders and teachers. He believes that this collegiality will set the tone for the whole learning community. I am inclined to agree, but I am curious how this collegiality will take place. Barth explains that collegiality will take place around four actions:

(1) Talk about practice among staff.
(2) Observe one another's work.
(3) Work together on curriculum.
(4) Teach one another what you know about your craft.

I sense that these actions will work in settings other than schools. I believe such a concept will work in any community of learners.

The four actions described by Barth are important, I believe, in researching educational needs for a curriculum for the education of youth workers. It will be important to work closely with youth workers but also to have them work with and interact with one another. They especially need to interact with one another about their own practice of working with youth. Their own critical reflection needs to be done, in part, in a community of learning with one another in order to provide a wide and rich resource base of knowledge about potential new curricula.

When Brubaker (1982) wrote of valuing the history of those who develop curriculum, he was envisioning a team or community approach to curriculum. In my case, valuing the knowledge of present youth workers in the development of a curriculum means helping future youth workers gain the knowledge they need to assist youth. Toward this end, I designed workshops to help youth workers design the curriculum.

The workshops posed a potential problem. They had to produce more than a program of planned activities which incorporated scopes, sequences, interpretations, balances of subject matter, teaching techniques, and other matters which can be planned in advance. Schubert (1986) points out the weakness of such an approach. In such an approach the emphasis is upon outward appearance and not inward development. Individuals who work as a team need to tap their own autobiographies. They needed to interpret their lived experiences and reconceptualize themselves as persons and youth workers. They also need to reconceptualize the world of the youth worker.

The world of the youth worker is the world, to some extent, of the adolescent. It is also the world of the church if the worker is part of a church staff. The world of the church is part of the world that youth workers need to reconceptualize. It is a real world of lived experience and, for many youth workers, the experience may be traumatic.

The church becomes a crucial element in the curriculum, and the leaders in the church need to be part of the curriculum's development. In the process, the church gains knowledge of youth and the lived experience of youth.

The lived experience of youth, however, is important and must not be ignored in the curriculum which is designed to train their leaders. Therefore, I am particularly interested in Eisner's (1993) concept of "representation." I believe that Eisner's notion is crucial in developing curriculum for youth workers.

According to Eisner's notion of representation knowledge is first impression. This means that it is interior or private within the person. For the person to make knowledge public, that knowledge must take some form of representation. Moreover, some forms of representation are more suitable than others for expressing certain forms of knowledge. Eisner (1993) claims that "we need to exploit the variety of expressive forms through which we understand and make public what we know" (1993, p.57). Such a strategy is pertinent in listening to the educational needs of youth workers who present themselves in individualized ways and, in turn, are working with young persons still struggling with self-esteem and identity. The research process, as part of the overall curriculum development process, must be open to many forms of representation, and encourage as much as possible the expression of diverse individual needs.

Summary

My search for literature to help me begin a process of curriculum development for church youth workers was encouraged and directed by Schubert's inclusive attitude about educators who exist outside schools. My particular context is the church. I no longer felt like an outsider in my quest to design curriculum. I had a real sense of collaborating with Schubert and others. I also saw that collaboration needed to be central to the curriculum I wished to design. I needed to collaborate with youth workers and not just educators.

A number of important issues were revealed in the review of literature. A curriculum intended to educate youth workers must also focus on youth -- their culture, developmental phases as adolescents, their environment in schools, family, and church. Adolescence is a transformational time, a time to revise the past, not just a transitional time from childhood to adulthood. Therefore, youth need adult companions who help them in the transformations.

Popular culture is important in shaping youth's values and knowledge. Youth workers and other adults need to understand this culture. Youth cannot be understood merely through psychology. They cannot be treated in the plural, but must be treated as individuals. The understanding and care of youth is a prime focus of the youth worker. Therefore, subjects, such as popular culture, adolescent development, and family are important in a curriculum designed to educate youth workers.

The literature, taken together, suggests that any curriculum designed to help people develop as youth workers must provide displays and activities (Aoki 1980) which enable them to create knowledge about adolescence. However, such a curriculum must also balance the need to know adolescents as individualized persons who are neither ahistorical nor carbon copies of a socially or psychologically described profile. This balance is a challenge for the curriculum I have begun to design.

Chapter 3

Research Methods and Design

Introduction

In this study, I wished to explore the experience of being a youth worker and the knowledge that youth workers have gained from their experience. Therefore, I have used mainly a qualitative approach situated within an interpretive framework. I also wanted to discover how, why, and where youth workers do youth work. To triangulate the data I combined three research methods in this study. The methods I chose were semi-structured interviews with individual youth workers, group discussions with youth workers and their supervisors in workshop settings, and a survey of youth.

I begin this chapter with a discussion of the theory of knowledge and its influence on my chosen research method. Also, I include a brief review of two topics, the research needs of the church and imagination as both influenced the design of my curriculum reported in Appendix A. There are four theoretical views of generating knowledge which influenced the way I designed, analyzed, and reported my data. They are: (1) positivism, (2) postpositivism, (3) critical theory, and (4) constructivism. I found it important, even necessary to check my own Christian faith and its emic view of knowledge with each of the four ways of knowing so that a credible and confirmable study would be undertaken on the experience of being a youth worker.

Finding a Research Orientation: Reconciling my Christian Faith

As a Christian, I admit my biases without apology. However, I also acknowledge that in the language of research the Christian bias, which for a Christian is a statement of faith, is sometimes interpreted as fundamentalism and is surely not accepted by everyone. It is neither proved nor disproved by any research orientation. However, once having acknowledged my faith, the challenge for me was to reconcile it with a robust research perspective that would allow me to apply my faith and evaluate that application.

More and more, researchers are open to combining methodologies emerging from different research perspectives. Jacknicke and Rowell (1987), for example, argue for complementarity in educational research. I wished to take advantage of the various paradigmatic perspectives and methods in a way which allowed me to still honour the Christian claim to revealed knowledge.

Denzin and Lincoln (1994, p.109) identify four major paradigms which guide researchers. The four they identify are: positivism, postpositivism, critical theory, and constructivism. Positivism places a strong emphasis upon what is quantifiable, predictable, and measurable. Postpositivism is still an objectivist approach to research. The main challenge of critical theory to positivism and postpostivism is its notion that what can be known is intertwined with the interaction between the investigator and that which is being investigated (Denzin and Lincoln p.110). Research methodology in this paradigm emphases dialectical dialogue. The desire is to bring to the surface or conscious level beliefs and assumptions which remain hidden or unconscious.

In constructivism there is no such thing as absolute truth. Constructions are not more or less true but more or less informed and sophisticated (Denzin and Lincoln p.111). Reality is constructed in the investigation by the interaction between the investigator and that which is being investigated. It should be noted that the traditional lines maintained between ontology and epistemology in positivism and postpositivism are broken down in critical theory and constructivism. This challenge can be difficult for Christians like me who claim a revealed knowledge.

Aoki (1984) articulates these perspectives in a way which I could understand and integrate with my own thinking using a framework developed by Habermas, Aoki explains that the human activities of work, communication, and reflection yield three forms of knowledge : empirical-analytical (technical), situational-interpretive, and critical. Technical knowledge is concerned with facts, theories, generalizations, and cause and effect laws. It seeks control, prediction, and efficiency. This technical perspective corresponds with positivism as described by Denzin and Lincoln. Interpretive knowledge is concerned with understanding perceptions and meanings people give to situations. It is open to the fact that programs have multiple meanings and realities for various participants. Critical knowledge is concerned with revealing underlying assumptions and making conscious unconsciously held beliefs. Thought can then be revealed and subsequent actions transformed in order to improve our human condition.

Aoki's description of the situational-interpretive perspective resonates with Denzin and Lincoln's (1994) constructivist paradigm and both describe the critical perspective in similar ways. For me these interpretive and critical orientations to inquiry were transformative, opening new ways of thinking and shaping the methods of my data collection and analysis. I realized that to pursue different kinds of knowledge, I could shift my various perspectives.

The following three examples illustrate how an inquiry which seeks different types of knowledge works. If I am interested in knowing the answer to the question "What will happen if I act in a certain manner?", I use a technical perspective. Suppose, as a teacher, I decide to enroll 50 people in my class. I now want to know what can I expect the average attendance to be. The knowledge I seek is technical, quantifiable, and predictable.

If, however, I wish to know what it means for people to attend the class, I seek a different type of knowledge. The knowledge I now wish to have is situational-interpretive knowledge. Situational-interpretive knowledge must be obtained by methods quite different than those used in ends-means perspective. This knowledge can only be gained through interacting with people. It might yield information telling me that some people attend because of friendships or relational issues. Others attend because they are learning new skills. Still others attend because they are gaining new insight. The class might well have various meanings for different people.

To illustrate the critical reflective approach I refer to an actual example. I was once asked to work with a group of people who had come together for a study and reflection. The core group all decided to invite one friend each to join them. Each person in the group was successful and was joined by a friend. Soon, however, all the friends ceased to come and only the original core was left. I used a critical reflective approach with the group. By posing questions the real reason for the friends dropping out of the group was discovered.

The group had met to study the Bible, and the core group had more than a basic knowledge of the text. The friends, however, had very limited knowledge of the text and had joined for relational reasons and out of interest to learn something about the Bible. During the study the people who started the group and knew the text well flipped about the book with ease. The newcomers started to feel embarrassed and a little "stupid." Few people join groups to feel stupid and intimidated. They stopped attending, but not because they had lost interest in the subject matter or being with their friends which is what the core group originally thought.

Depending upon the knowledge we wish to obtain, we approach our research and evaluation from a certain paradigmatic viewpoint. Unless we believe that the only worthwhile knowledge is that which we can quantify then we must use various perspectives in doing research. One approach yields knowledge which tells us an efficient way to work with people. It does not, however, tell us about the experience and the meaning those people might have when they are together or involved in some process. This knowledge is gained by a different approach, one which does not view people objectively but talks with people in their situation to discover the meaning they give to that situation. To discover certain unnamed assumptions in the group, a third approach is used which yields information which, now that it is no longer hidden, leads to improving the group experience for its members.

I found these perspectives helpful in designing and carrying out my research with youth and youth workers. If I am interested in evaluating the degree of relatedness between means and ends, I can use a technical perspective. I have found the interpretive perspective helpful in making explicit what is meaningful and relevant to persons involved. In the interpretive perspective the researcher works with people in a mutualistic manner to gain information using interviews and observations.

The critical perspective has helped me reveal the underlying assumptions, interests, and approaches to youth work by youth workers. The methodology I used in this perspective were interviews, observations, and document analysis.

By approaching my research from these perspectives, I obtained a more full and rich body of knowledge about church youth workers' educational needs. The data gathered represents many different aspects of the curriculum. But most important these three perspectives gave me greater insight into my own ways of thinking and perceiving, and helped me appreciate the worldviews of others with whom I conversed in the course of this study.

Research Needs of the Church

Mowry (1993) identifies three research needs of the church. The first is people research. We need to know how people grow and change. He says, "Insight, not prediction or control, is our aim in people research" (1993 p.58). The second research need is information research. Information research helps us learn from the work of others. A third area is program research. The church needs to create new programs. Mowry labels the overall approach to research the church needs as a "reflective approach." He says, "A reflective approach turns research into an *interactive process* rather than a cold objective detachment"(1993 p. 59). Dialogue is important for the development of knowledge and, therefore, research methodologies must be designed to create and stimulate dialogue between the researcher and participants.

One advantage of a reflective approach is that it values the knowledge from one's own experience. Bennis (1989) writes, "Reflection may be the pivotal way we learn. Consider some of the ways of reflecting: looking back, thinking back, dreaming, journalling, talking it out, watching last week's game, asking for critiques, going on retreats -- even telling jokes"(p. 115).

Peter Drucker (1978), known for his writings on business and leadership, makes the following comment about his memoir which captures the very heart of what I am looking for in my research. He says,

> ...it is an intensely subjective book, the way a first-rate photographer tries to be. It deals with people and events that have struck me--and still strike me--as worth recording, worth thinking about, worth rethinking and reflecting on, people and events that I had to fit into the pattern of my own experience and into my own fragmentary vision of the world around me and inside me. (1978 p.1)

Drucker's description catches what I wanted my research to be. The issue of youth, those who work with youth, and how we come alongside and help build curriculum is worth recording, thinking about, and reflecting upon until it yields knowledge and understanding that takes us a step further along the journey of working with youth. I wanted to engage youth workers in such a way that they reflected upon the world around them and within them so that, out of their experience, together we could develop curriculum relevant to their vocation.

The concern that can be brought to research involving youth workers with this type of methodology is "What are the ways youth workers do youth work?" Also how, where, and why do they do youth work? These are issues best expressed and uncovered by more qualitative and interpretive approaches to inquiry than seeking ways to be more efficient and "right" in the way youth work is done. The goal of my research has challenged me to design a methodology of research which permits youth workers to make explicit their experience and knowledge of youth work.

Freire (1970) was also concerned with knowledge which comes out of experience. He refers to what he calls thought-language. Thought-language is "...the possibility of knowing through his praxis, by which man transforms reality" (1970, p.206). This way of knowing in the world is not just subjective, objective, nor mechanistic. It is, according to Friere, "an event in which subjectivity and objectivity are united. This involvement in the world causes us, as humans, to deal with history and values in such a way that we work to transform the world." I am looking for a way to eventually build transformational curriculum. I wanted to engage youth workers in the process which will result in a curriculum that comes out of their praxis but which helps transform their *present* world to more closely approximate their *ideal or target* world.

Youth workers will not journey toward their ideal by merely using empirical means, trying to discover the right way of doing youth work. They will, I believe, make progress by discovering their own values, their own history, the history of the youth they work with and befriend, and by striving to transform their world.

The Presence of Imagination

Another area relevant to my research design is the concept of imagination as discussed by Groome (1980). I see imagination as linked to the future because imagination helps us conceive how things could or ought to be. But for something to be seen as different than the present, the present must be defined and expressed as fully as possible. The present is both our starting point for looking into the past and for constructing the future. Groome's development of this concept was very helpful for my research design. He also applied his thinking to the church, which is helpful for my purposes.

Groome (1980) says, " Imagination is needed as we look at both the present and the past, but its predominant focus is the future" (p.186). He deals with the subject of imagination within the context of describing education, particularly Christian education, as a shared praxis. There are five main components to a shared praxis:

(1) present action,
(2) critical reflection,
(3) dialogue,
(4) the Story,
(5) the Vision that arises from the Story.

Groome develops these components into five movements for pedagogy.

Groome takes pains to describe what he means by present action. It is necessary to grasp his definition of present action in order to understand what he means by imagination.

> Present action means our whole human engagement in the world, our every doing that has any intentionality or deliberateness to it. Present action is whatever way we give expression to ourselves. It includes what we are doing physically, emotionally, intellectually, and spiritually as we live on personal, interpersonal, and social levels. In a sense, it encompasses any kind of human activity beyond the inevitable metabolic activity of our bodies. (p. 184).

Groome echoes Eisner (1993) and Freire (1970). All three place importance on the ability to use the imagination to realize a better or different future and transform our world by a journey towards a more ideal form of the present. For Groome, this means taking critical reflection very seriously. The present action, once described, is the focus of our critical reflection. Groome, unlike some others, does not speak of experience as such, but rather speaks of critical reflection on the self. For him action arises from the self and "the primary object of reflection is the self who reflects" (p.185).

Groome gives an insightful description of why the exercise of critical reflection is so important.

> Reflection on the self is also primary in the sense that in a praxis way of knowing one begins with one's own constitutive knowing, with how one makes meaning out of one's own present action. To begin with what "they say" would be to fall back into a *theoria* epistemology (p.185)

Present action involves experience, and Groome suggests that out of our present action -- which includes experience -- we create meaning. He puts it well when he says that just to rely on what "they say" would be a falling back into theory. The imagination would not play a part in such an approach to education.

Reflection on the self is more than a highly personal subjective exercise. The self is socially mediated, and reflection includes reflection upon a historical self and society. The purpose of critical reflection is first to uncover and perceive the obvious. Groome says that we need "to critically apprehend it rather than passively accept it as 'just the way things are'"(p. 185). However, critical reflection needs to go further and uncover the hidden or not so obvious, going to the point of how and why we started to do what we do in the present. This means using critical memory. Groome adds that "critical memory is needed to break open the hardened shell of the past in the present, so as to prevent it from determining the present" (p. 186).

Groome's ideas were important to my research because I wished to use much of his ideas on shared praxis in the way I did the workshops with youth workers. The workshops started with an exercise in which youth workers were asked to share concretely and richly their "present action" in relation to youth work. The second part of the workshop asked them to reflect on present action but now in terms of how they would want it to be. Third, the workshop participants were challenged to put their ideals into a Christian religious education curriculum which might address their needs and the needs of the church in the area of youth ministry. The discussions which took place among the youth workers and between them and myself reflected Groome's fourth and fifth movements of a critique of the participants' stories with the community's Story and their visions with the Vision of God's Kingdom.

Groome comments that "The reason we attend to the present and the past is that we may intend the future. But intending the future requires imagination; otherwise the future will be little more than repetition of the past." He adds, "Imagination involves a refusal to duplicate what is given or to take the shape of the future as inevitable" (p. 186). It is important to me that my research encourage youth workers to help construct a curriculum that will be a departure from the past. Groome's remark encourages me: "If our education is to promote this essential dimension of being human, then it must encourage imagination" (p. 187). This latter statement is crucial in the curriculum I envisioned. It was my assumption that encouraging the use of imagination among youth workers could help produce a curriculum that expanded my vision and was more relevant to their needs.

Kaplan (1984) says that "Imagination is the light of human reason. It guides us out of the darkness in which nature has enveloped us" (p. 317). She also cautions that our responsibilities lie in the actual world and that imagination can be used to avoid such responsibilities. However, she adds, " Compassion itself, from which flows all our social virtues -- generosity, clemency, justice -- is inconceivable without imagination. The most significant act of imagination is our capacity to experience what others experience" (p. 318).

Imagination should be encouraged and harnessed for the construction of curriculum and the development of adolescents. Kaplan again states boldly that "Without imagination and the ideals of perfectibility it nourishes we would not willingly suffer the sacrifices entailed in belonging to the world of others" (p. 319). Imagination is therefore crucial in the development of caring which is an aim of the curriculum being designed.

RESEARCH DESIGN

A Summary of Research Activity

I drew my data from a variety of sources. These sources include youth workers, junior and senior high youth, and those institutions already involved in the education of youth workers. To collect this data I designed three components:

(1) A set of four workshops with youth workers.

(2) Interviews with a six youth workers, selected from workshop participants.

(3) A survey of junior and senior high youth.

I also collected samples of current course offerings from colleges offering courses for youth workers. This information was used as background knowledge and was never intended to be reported in the research findings. These three components provided triangulation in the collecting and assessing of data and permitted me to obtain data which I might have missed if I only used one method.

In the summer of 1994, I surveyed 437 junior and senior high youth in Alberta and British Columbia. In the fall and early winter of 1995 I conducted four research workshops with youth workers. The workshops were conducted in Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton, and Regina. Over a four-month period in 1995, I conducted six interviews with a select group of youth workers. The six youth workers interviewed included both men and women. They represented a geographic diversity. From my work with churches prior to doing the research, I understood that most church leaders had not given much consideration to educational backgrounds of youth workers. Many seminaries and many colleges were not offering any courses or programs that would help educate youth workers.

Component #1: Youth Worker Workshops

Because my intention was to develop a curriculum for educating youth workers, I proposed to conduct this research in a collaborative manner. I wished to involve present supervisors of youth workers and the youth workers themselves in the collecting of data and the design of curriculum. To accomplish this function I conducted four workshops throughout Western Canada. These workshops followed the ideas of Dr. Ken Jacknicke and Dr. Larry Beauchamp of the University of Alberta, who created much of this workshop design. On two separate occasions I interviewed first Dr. Jacknicke and then Dr. Beauchamp about how they used the design and how I might use the design. The workshops involved myself as facilitator and supervisors and youth workers as participants. Each workshop involved 7 to 49 persons. The following is an outline of the workshop process I used.

The first intent of the workshop was to help the participants describe the current situation, as they know and experience it, in youth work. Participants were divided into groups of four. Each group was given chart paper and asked to record its descriptions of the current situation. The chart paper enabled each group to post its descriptions and share them with others. The process of groups posting and sharing their descriptions helped the whole group begin to establish a common picture. One purpose of having workshops across Western Canada was to see if there was a larger common picture.

The second stage in the workshop process described an ideal situation. People worked in the same groups and again used chart paper. They described the situation as they would like it to be. This ideal situation was called the target. As in the first stage, each group posted its ideal description alongside the current description and report on the ideal.

The third stage was called "Closing the Gap." Each group produced a description of the current situation and a description of the ideal. They were obviously not the same in all respects. In some instances they were completely different. The challenge for this part of the research was to move from the current to the ideal or to close the gap between the two.

I worked to close the gap by asking the groups to, using chart paper, develop goal statements to close the gap between "what is" (the current situation) and "what ought to be" (the target). Each group posted and explained its goal statements.

The next stage involved the facilitator solely. While others went for lunch, I consolidated the lists into one list. The consolidated list was presented to the whole group for clarification and modification.

The fifth stage was designed to establish an order of priority. One method I adopted from Beauchamp was to give each participant a set number of red "stick-on" dots. Workshop participants placed a dot or dots beside the goal or goals they considered most important. People can place all their dots beside one goal if they choose. (Jacknicke has found that in situations where numbers might be important to your research, numbers can be used instead of dots. The participants have three choices and can rate their choices by putting a "1" by the first priority, a "2" by their second priority, and a "3" by their third priority. All the numbers can be placed by one choice indicating a very strong support for the one item.) In my research, I believed that a numerical method would best facilitate the reporting of the data.

Once a prioritizing of goals was determined, participants pursued plans about what goals could be achieved through training. The sub-groups were given one or two goals each and asked to discuss ways in which curriculum could be useful. Further, the participants were asked to suggest ways the curriculum could be designed to best meet their goal priorities. This latter stage was a process of developing activities, curriculum activities in this case, which would further the goals or close the gap between the current situation and the target situation. Prior to my research, I had decided that four to six such seminars would, in a collaborative manner, assemble a significant amount of data relevant to particular curriculum needs and design needs. The findings from the workshops will be outlined more extensively in chapter four.

Component # 2: Interview Current Youth Workers

I chose a sample group of six youth workers, geographically distributed across Western Canada and representative of large churches and smaller churches, as well as small town and large urban areas. I interviewed these workers using both structured and non-structured questions. The interviewing permitted me to gain a more personal sense of the youth worker's situation from their perspective. The results of these interviews will be outlined and analyzed more extensively in chapter four.

Component # 3: Assessing Course Offerings for Youth Workers

I solicited descriptions of current courses offered in Christian colleges and seminaries for the development of youth workers. This data provided a description of the current situation. Although it is not reported in the research findings, it served as background information. This information helped inform decisions about the future or targeted situation. For example, I already knew, and discussed earlier in this proposal, that many courses offered for youth workers were electives within a program designed to train persons for pastoral ministry. I decided that in order to be seen as legitimate, the ultimate target had to be a program of study centered on training for youth work.

Component # 4: A Youth Questionnaire

I concluded that I should design a questionnaire for youth that would elicit their responses about what they desire and value most in a youth worker. I also decided that the research would be imbalanced if this element of data were not solicited and examined. The curriculum needed to be informed from this source.

Recent social research by Bibby and Posterski (1985; 1992) on youth in Canada provided general and reliable data about trends among youth. This research is used in the Review of Literature and provided useful stimulus in the workshops and the writing of my own research. The reseults of the youth questionnaire are presnted more extensively in chapter four.

Ensuring Data Trustworthiness

The process of data analysis unwound in a circular, recursive manner throughout the period in which I was in conversation with the research participants. After the last formal conversation was tape-recorded and transcribed, my journal writing continued as I continued the analysis of the transcripts and reflective discourse with my own analysis.

In my analysis I used the constant comparative method underlying grounded theory. This method involves the systematic categorization of data and gradual conceptualization of links between these categories. Glaser (1978) describes the constant comparative method as "data collection, open categorizing, memoing, moving toward parsimony through the determination of a core category, recycling of earlier steps in terms of the core category, sorting of memos, and the write-up of the theory" (p. 68).

This approach to analysing data begins with the multiple readings of the transcripts and coding the data. Coding is applying a descriptive label to each concept found in the data, by comparing incidents and asking questions, looking for patterns that illuminate categories. These categories are then applied to further readings of the transcripts to gradually determine the properties of the categories and to clarify the emerging constructs of the theory. "Comparative analysis forces the researcher to expand or "tease out" the emerging category or construct be searching for its structure, cause, context, dimensions, consequences, and its relationship to other categories" (Hutchinson, 1988, p. 20). Strauss and Corbin (1990) explain coding as breaking the data into discrete parts. Then as theoretical constructs are developed they are applied to help weave the fractured data back together again in new ways by making connections between a category and its subcategories. Henwood and Pidgeon (1992) suggest the following methods for this process:

> Theoretical saturation of categories (coding of instances until no new examples of variation are found); writing definitions of categories that have achieved saturation; writing memoranda recording all of the analyst's observations during the course of analysis; linking categories together, often involving the creation of new overarching categories at higher levels of abstraction; and seeking more data where this appears necessary to elucidate aspects of the emerging theory" (Henwood and Pidgeon, 1992, p. 103).

Rather than subjecting the transcripts to a line-by-line analysis, I began the analysis of each individual transcript by looking for those concepts that I had noted in my journal as impressing me during the recorded conversation as being somehow germane to that individual's understanding of their learning in work experience. I looked for themes and stories that the youth workers repeated or emphasized. I also found myself being very alert to evidence in the transcripts confirming or discomfirming concepts I had gleaned from literature related to learning processes in the workplace. The initial codes were idiosyncratic and closely meshed with each participant's own experiences within the framework of their worldview.

When I began the process of constant comparison across the transcripts, I found similarities and differences in the participants' narratives, which led me to split, combine, or subsume initial codes under higher order categories. This blending of descriptive and constructed categories is, according to Glaser (1978), typical of the grounded theory process. I kept circling back to the transcripts with this list, interpreting the life histories of the participants while gradually refining the constructs and categories. When I felt I had reached saturation of the categories, which Hutchinson (1986) describes as "the completeness of all levels of codes when no new information is available to indicate new codes or the expansion of old ones, when all data fit into the established categories" (Hutchinson, 1986, p. 125), I tried to identify core categories. Corbin and Strauss (1990) define the core category as "the central phenomenon of the study":

> It is identified by asking questions such as: What is the main analytic idea represented in this research? If my findings are to be conceptualized in a few sentences, what do I say? What does all the action/interaction seem to be about? How can I explain the variation that I see between and among the categories? The core category might emerge from the categories already identified or a more abstract term may be needed to explain the phenomenon. (Corbin and Strauss, 1990, p. 14))

Validity

The research approaches used in this study were qualitative. The research methodologies used were hermeneutic in nature; interpreting information gained through interviewing, workshops, and surveys. Guba and Lincoln (1989) assert that a hermeneutic/dialectic process that takes full advantage, and account, of the observer/observed interaction to create a constructed reality is an informed and sophisticated approach to inquiry at a particular point in time (p. 44).

Validity in qualitative research has been conceptualized as "the adequacy of a description as a representation of a social situation" (Dawson, 1979, p.1). Dawson proposes that the adequacy of a description can be judged in relation to its purposes. The purpose of this study was to describe and interpret the real world and lived experience of youth workers in the church.

Ratcliffe (1983) observes that data do not speak for themselves; they always need an interpreter (p. 149). Merriam (1988) claims that "One of the assumptions of qualitative research is that reality is holistic, multidimensional, and ever-changing; it is not a single, fixed, objective phenomenon waiting to be discovered, observed, and measured" (p.167). She also claims that "What is being observed are people's constructions of reality, how they understand the world" (p. 167). Therefore the qualitative researcher is interested in perspectives rather than facts. The aim for the investigator is to give an honest rendering of the participant's perspective.

Merriam (1998) claims that according to the literature and research experience there are six basic strategies an investigator can use to ensure internal validity. They are: (1) Triangulation -- using multiple sources and methods to confirm the findings. (2) Member checks -- taking data and interpretation back to the people from whom they were derived and asking them if the results are plausible. (3) Long-term observation or repeated observations -- gathering data over a period of time in order to increase the validity of the findings. (4) Peer examination -- asking colleagues to comment on the findings as they emerge. (5) Participatory modes of research -- involving participants in all phases of research. and (6) Researcher's biases -- clarifying the researcher's assumptions, worldview, and theoretical orientation at the outset of the study (pp. 169-

170). Guba and Lincoln (1985) also propose triangulation, member checks, and keeping an audit trail. I kept a trail which consisted of transcripts from taped interviews, workshop notes and data produced by participants, and my own research journal in which I recorded my observations and interpretations of conversations and events observed.

In my study I followed quite closely Merriam's six strategies for ensuring internal validity. I used triangulation in both methodology of inquiry and sources. I used surveys with youth, workshops using a shared praxis approach with youth workers, and interviews with a select group of youth workers. Through discussions and seminars with youth workers I regularly checked with them about my interpretation of the data. The inquiry I did was over a period of two years and in three different provinces. I regularly consulted and shared findings with peers in the academic community and professionals involved in youth work to obtain their comments on my work. Youth and youth workers were involved in all phases of the inquiry from design to interpretation. I did pilot projects with sample groups for all three methods of research before actually beginning my inquiry. Finally my own biases have been fully and explicitly declared in this document and prior to engaging in any inquiry.

Reliability

Guba and Lincoln (1981) make a case that if internal validity is carefully attended to then reliability is also addressed when doing qualitative research. "Since it is impossible to have internal validity without reliability, a demonstration of internal validity amounts to a simultaneous demonstration of reliability" (p. 120). Reliability also depends upon a reader's assessment of me as a research instrument. I have made clear my biases and the attempts made to obtain internal validity. I can add that for over twenty years I have been honing my skills in conducting workshops. I therefore did not approach inquiry through workshops without considerable experience in such settings. I also have had intensive training with observers in the interview process using both structured and unstructured interviews. For more than ten years I have employed interviewing in my work of conflict management which included constant checks with persons interviewed about my analysis and interpretation of what they reported.

McCutcheon (1981) articulated several criteria which might help the reader assess the reliability of any inquiry. They are:

(1) Whether the line of reason is sound.

(2) Whether sufficient evidence is presented in support of the interpretation.

(3) Whether the interpretation promotes significant understanding.

Any repeatability of this study can never be total or complete because the experience in the research setting is unique, situated, and dialectically related. However, readers may see the similarities and contrasts in their own situation and therefore view this study's report as significant and reliable.

Data Analysis

I have been decidedly pragmatic, believing that I should do whatever is necessary to inform this important issue of preparing youth workers through a better understanding of what it is like to be a youth worker. Therefore I am comfortable in providing both qualitative and quantitative data. Miles and Huberman (1984) note that in qualitative data analysis the data concerned appear in words and not in numbers. This is true for much of my inquiry. Although significant portions of the survey with youth has been presented in numerically, the analysis has largely been interpretative. Miles and Huberman state "that analysis consists of three concurrent flows of activity: data reduction, data display, and conclusion-drawing/verification" (p. 23). Data reduction occurs throughout the duration of a qualitative inquiry as the investigator makes sampling decisions, edits and codes field notes and makes summaries. Miles and Humerman also argue for better display of qualitative data other than just lengthy narrative. In my presentation of data I have favoured their suggestion by presenting data in forms other than just narrative. Data display is also not separate from analysis but is also a part of analytic exercise. The final activity of analysis is drawing conclusions or meaning from the data reduced and displayed. The investigator looks for patterns, matters which are implicit but which can be made explicit, and in the case of my inquiry I looked for themes.

Description of Research

In the survey done with youth I chose three camp settings. Two of the camps were in British Columbia and one was in Alberta. I chose the camps for several reasons: (1) All three operated several camp program throughout the summer for both junior high and senior high youth; (2) I wanted to survey both junior and senior high youth because most youth workers are involved with both age groups; (3) I was able to obtain the permission of the Directors of all three camps to do the survey;. and (4) the surveys would be collected over a two-month period in the summer of 1994. I felt that the geographic distribution and time variance would add validity to the study.

At each camp I carefully instructed one of the staff members about how to administer the survey. During each of the camp programs a time was set aside for youth to be instructed about the survey, its purpose, and that they did not need to participate in filling out the survey. When the surveys were completed the staff member collected them and any which might have been left blank and mailed them to me at the end of the summer.

Because I had previously used the survey in a pilot project with a group of junior and senior high youth to discover how junior and senior high youth might respond to the questions I had some sense of the type of responses I might receive. I therefore had determined that I would organize all the responses to each question first according to the camp context, and whether it was a junior or senior high program. I then looked for patterns and regularities in the responses.

Once I had done this analysis I looked to see if there were any discrepancies between the camps according to emerging patterns, and I found none. When I compared the junior highs to the senior highs I did find some differences, and these are noted in the data presentation. Because my purpose was to look for emergent themes which might later indicate principles for producing curriculum I began to reduce the data to themes. I wanted to discover whether these themes might relate to any themes which might emerge from the data produced by workshops and interviews with youth workers. I purposefully did the analysis of the surveys before I did any analysis of the workshops.

For the workshops I chose four sites: Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton, and Regina. These sites were chosen for the following reasons: (1) in all four sites I had contact with youth workers who were associated with the development of my inquiry and according to Merriam (1988) this increases the possibility of validity in the inquiry; (2) I knew that these sites had the possibility of producing a workshop where I could have six or more youth workers; (3) I knew that I would have a very good chance of having a cross-section of men and women; and (4) I knew that these cities had youth workers working in a variety of settings.

I worked closely with a youth worker who became the actual person who contacted the youth workers and invited them to the workshop. This person knew why I chose these sites but I personally did not invite any particular persons to the workshops. I deliberately chose not to influence who might or might not attend.

In the actual workshop I would be introduced by the youth worker who invited the participants and I, once again, made it clear that this was a research workshop and my purpose was to discover ways to assist youth workers through education and the development of curriculum. I explained the sequence of the day and the purpose of each section of the workshop. I had participants fill out cards with their names, the type of youth work they were doing, and also to indicate if they were willing to be interviewed at some later date.

The workshop was formatted so that much of the work was done in small groups. These groups kept notes and later presented ideas on chart paper. I collected all the notes and chart paper and also had someone at each workshop take notes of the discussions. I also made my own field notes during and after the workshops.

The workshop material was displayed on chart paper and in notes by the groups. I later transcribed this material and began some data reduction by looking for regularities and patterns. These were all categorized according to the sites. The data was further analyzed and reduced to look for patterns and regularities between sites. The final reduction was the expression of themes out of which curriculum principles could be produced. The workshop material was analyzed prior to any analysis of the interview data.

The Interviews:

The six youth workers chosen for interviews had all indicated a willingness to be interviewed. Four of the six had participated in the workshops. I chose two who had not participated in the workshops in case the workshops might have formed some biases. The six were chosen to give a balance to urban, semi-urban settings, male and female balance, provincial balance(three provinces were represented), and all were in very distinct situations in regard to the type of youth work they were doing.

The interviews were semi-structured, and all were taped. Following the interviews the tapes were transcribed and accuracy verified. The interviews were analyzed to look for patterns and regularities and some emerged. The interviews also yielded data which was unique because I felt it offered a very female perspective which did not emerge from the workshops. It was also unique because it was context specific.

Because I was the research instrument I had to make decisions about some of the uniqueness of the interview data as I analyzed and reduced the data. Some of this description remains part of the data presentation in the narrative and thick description of the lived experience of the youth worker.

The final reduction of the youth worker interview data was to produce themes and then to compare these themes to those which emerged from the workshops and the surveys. Once again patterns and regularities were noted and these emerged as the grand themes which are reported in the presentation of data in Chapter four.

Ethical Considerations

Formal ethical approval for the research was received from the Department's Ethical Review Committee. All participants were fully informed about the purpose of the research and all participated on a voluntary basis. All participants knew that they could withdraw from participation at any time. Consent was received from those interviewed that the interviews could be taped. All data was considered to be confidential and no names were ever used in any presentation of the data.

Summary

The main goal of my research into the experience of being a youth worker was a desire to produce a curriculum for the education of youth workers that was transformational. Therefore, the data came out of the praxis of youth workers. The data represented, I believe, the voice of youth workers. When their voices are represented in the curriculum there exists the probability that their present world can be transformed into something closer to their ideal.

This approach to curriculum design assumes that the instructor alone cannot impart the ideal. The experience of youth workers is also crucial in working towards the ideal. I believe there needs to be a balance between using the knowledge of the instructor and the knowledge of the students in our approach to curriculum design. I found Groome's (1980) five pedagogical movements helpful in bringing balance between the students' knowledge and the instructor's knowledge in curriculum design.

Eisner's (1993) emphasis on representation also helped to bring balance. The use of youth workers' experiences gave a particular form to the curriculum. It is particular because it uses the imagination. I believe the use of imagination is essential if we want to move towards the future and a more ideal world.

The next chapter describes the voices of youth and youth workers. Through the use of a cross-paradigmatic approach to research a rich body of knowledge is formed from the data produced in the surveys, workshops, and interviews.

Chapter 4

Towards Giving Youth and Youth Workers a Voice

Introduction

The research I conducted went much as proposed and designed. Having conducted the research, there is little about the design I would change. It worked well. I conducted the research and analyzed the data that I gathered as follows: First, I gathered information from youth and youth workers in three broad categories (1) from a survey of 437 youth, (2) four workshops with youth workers, and (3) 6 interviews with youth workers. Each category yielded rich knowledge about the experience of being a youth worker; experience which is summarized as themes described at the end of this chapter.

The identification of themes was accomplished by reviewing field notes from surveys, interviews, and workshops, as well as, looking for recurrences of ideas, commonalties in problems and solutions, repetitive motivational and emotional struggles, and shared perspectives on what it means to do youth work. The themes were revealed from the language used by the participants in the study and revealed what the "youth worker experience" was really like.

Third, from the themes I was able to identify six principles for developing and organizing written curriculum for educating youth workers. Those themes naturally gave rise to the curriculum principles. When I applied the hermeneutic questions to the themes: (1) What curriculum for preparing youth workers best affirms, and conforms to, the actual experience of being a youth worker? and (2) How does the actual experience of being a youth worker inform, or call into question, how we currently educate youth workers?

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

Listening to Junior and Senior High Youth

During the summer and fall of 1994, I conducted a youth survey in four different sites in the provinces of Alberta and British Columbia: Gull Lake Camp and Retreat Center in central Alberta, Keats Island Camp in the Howe Sound near Vancouver, Slyvan Acres Camp on Vancouver Island, and the Baptist Leadership Training School in Calgary. The survey covered both junior and senior high teens in the three camps sites. The Baptist Leadership Training School consisted solely of youth who had just graduated from high school.

Before using the survey instrument I tested it with a group of teens to determine if the questions were clear and if the responses elicited the type of information the survey was designed to elicit. The survey was also reviewed by the examining committee who reviewed my Dissertation Proposal. Only minor revisions were necessary from the original.

The survey gave the youth who participated the opportunity to express their opinions about several key matters involving youth workers. The information they gave was seen as a crucial section of data required to determine the type and style of curriculum needed to educate Youth Workers. All participants in the survey were carefully instructed as to the nature of the survey and told that they did not have to participate. Furthermore, the opportunity to opt out of participation was repeated in the text of the questionnaire.

Percentages and Numbers of Youth Involved in the Survey:

At the Sylvan Acres Camp on Vancouver Island, I collected responses from 43 junior high and 17 high school youth. The Keats Island Camp, near Vancouver, involved responses from 133 junior high and 61 high school youth. One senior high questionnaire was returned blank, so there were actually a total of 60 questionnaires with responses. The Gull Lake Camp survey involved both junior and senior high youth. However, this group contained a subgroup of high school youth who were involved throughout the summer in a three-year leadership program called the "Leadership Training and Discipleship" program or LTD. Of the 54 senior high youth in this program, 52 participated in the survey. Later in the summer 43 junior high youth from Gull Lake Camp participated in the survey. Another 41 high school youth completed the survey in addition to those involved in the LTD program. The Gull Lake Camp totals were 43 junior high youth and 93 senior high youth.

At the Baptist Leadership Training School, 40 youth participated in the survey. These youth had just completed high school and represented an even greater geographic diversity than youth from the three camps. The students came from all four western Canadian provinces as well as Ontario and Quebec. This group was given the same survey as the youth in the three camps. However, after completing the survey they were asked an additional four questions.

I asked these additional questions because all the youth were involved in a one-year program of leadership development before going on to further education. The questions were designed to determine their previous involvement in leadership with youth, their future desire to be involved in youth leadership as a career, and any relationship between previous involvement and future desire for involvement with youth. These questions yielded some completely unanticipated and helpful data.

The data revealed a strong relationship between previous leadership experience and a later or continued desire to be a leader. The data is presented and examined in Tables 10 and 11 on page 97. However, as noted, the addition of these four questions for this group yielded rich and valuable information which needs to be researched with a much larger group. The responses raise further questions of a possible strong link between early experience of leadership and a later desire to gain more knowledge concerning leadership. The link needs to be examined because of its potential implications for curriculum content and design. Another potential question would be the examination of what, for a young person, constitutes a leadership experience.

The total number of survey responses was 430. Of these 219 were junior high youth, 171 were senior high youth, and 40 were immediate post high youth. A total of 437 youth were involved in the survey. Of this number, 7 returned questionnaires as complete blanks. See the Table on page 81 for comparison of numbers.

Table: 3

Comparison of numbers of responses by junior and senior high youth to youth survey.

Junior and Senior High Survey

Site	**Junior High**	**Senior High**	**Post High**
Sylvan Lake	43	17	
Keats	133	61	
Gull Lake	43	93	
BLTS			40
Subtotals:	219	171	40
Total of all responses:			430

Note: The total number of participants was 437. Seven blank surveys were received. This represents a response rate of just over 98%.

Figure # 1 represents the data in a more visual form. The visual gives the same information as Table 3, but the different form allows some factors to be more readily seen. The weighting of the junior highs at Sylvan Acres is almost identical to that of the post highs at BLTS. This data could be used to follow changes in responses from a junior high group to a post high group. Another factor struck me when I presented the data visually: the camp profile at Keats is almost the opposite of Gull Lake. This camp attracts more junior teens than seniors while the reverse is true at Gull Lake. The question might be asked; What place does the LTD (leadership program) at Gull Lake have on attracting more senior high youth? Over 50% of the number of senior teens at Gull Lake are in the LTD program. The presentation of data does influence that way one begins to use the data.

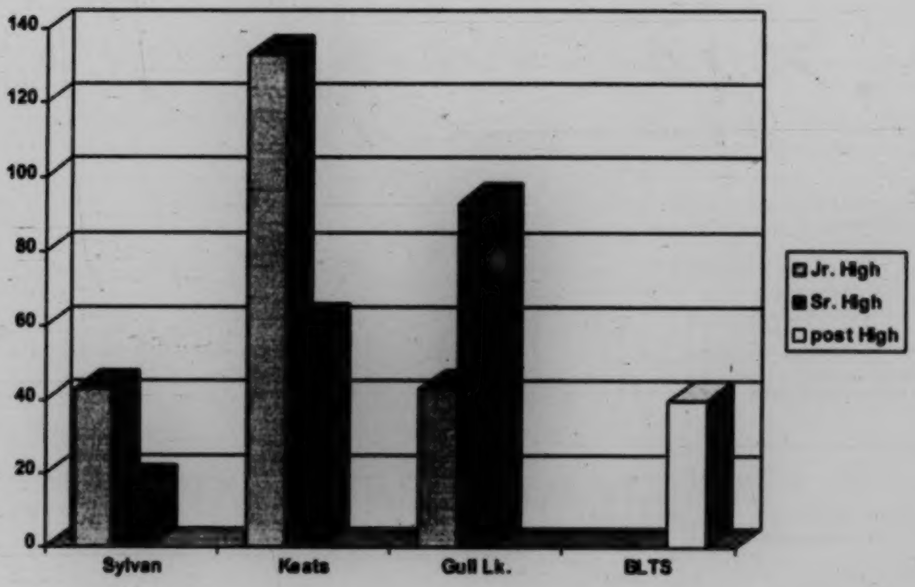

Figure 1. Comparisons of responses of junior, senior high, and post high youth to youth survey from various sites.

SURVEY EXAMINED

Question #1: What grade will you be entering this Fall?

This question allowed me to quantify and compare information. The junior high youth can be separated from the senior high and data comparisons made between the two groups. For example, at Gull Lake camp I know that of the junior highs 15 were in grade seven, 9 were in grade 8, and 18 were in grade nine for a total of 43. In the senior high category at the same camp I had 22 in grade 10, 11 in grade 11, and 7 in grade 12 for a total of 46. I know that there is virtually no difference in the numbers of junior highs who see administration as important work for the youth worker in comparison to the number of senior highs who see this as important. I also know that the weighting in this category between the senior highs at Gull Lake in Alberta is identical to the numbers at Keats in British Columbia.

Question #2: Does your church have a youth group for your age level?

The second question tried to establish whether these youth were connected in any way with a church which had a youth group that worked with youth their own age. Table 4 on page 84 shows the responses to the survey in terms of numbers in each category and from each site where the survey was conducted. Table 5 on page 85 shows the breakdown in terms of percentages of total responses received.

Table: 4

Analysis of responses to question #2: Does your church have a youth group for your age?

Site:		Yes	No	Unsure
Sylvan Acres	Junior. High	22	9	12
	Senior High	12	0	5
Keats	Junior High	74	19	40
	Senior High	38	10	13
Gull Lake	Junior High	30	6	7
	Senior High	81	6	6
BLTS	Post High	33	7	0
Totals:		290	57	83 = 430

Table: 5

Response to survey viewed in percentages of total responses received.

Jr. Highs in churches with youth groups for their age:	58%
Jr. Highs in churches without youth groups for their age:	16%
Jr. Highs who are unaware if church has youth group for their age:	26%
Total:	100%
Sr. Highs in churches with youth groups for their age:	77%
Sr. Highs in churches without youth groups for their age:	9%
Sr. Highs who are unaware if church has youth group for their age	14 %
Total:	100%
Post Highs in churches with youth groups for their age:	83%
Post Highs in churches without youth groups for their age:	17%
Post Highs who are unaware if church has youth groups for their age:	0%
Total:	100%

Question #3: Does your church have a youth worker on staff either full or part-time?

Question number three was designed to discover how many youth were connected with a church with a full or part-time youth worker on staff. Table 6 shows the results.

Table: 6

Analysis of responses to question: Does your church have a youth worker on staff, either full or part-time?

Site:		Yes	No	Unsure
Sylvan Acres:	Jr. High	12	17	14
	Sr. High	12	0	5
Keats:	Jr. High	111	15	7
	Sr.High	38	10	13
Gull Lake	Jr. High	26	5	12
	Sr. High	72	15	6
BLTS	Post High	32	8	0
Totals:		303	70	57 = 430

Note. A number of the youth involved in the survey did not have any other connection to the church other than with a youth group or activity. Therefore, they were uncertain whether the church had a youth worker on staff. The post-high group at BLTS were all involved in a local church and were more aware of who were staff and who were volunteers. For example, typical answers for junior highs were "I don't know", or "I don't know because I don't go to church." At the BLTS level no answered "I don't know."

Table 7

Responses to question: Does your church have a youth worker on staff either full time or part-time? The data is revealed in percentages.

Jr. Highs with youth worker in church:	68%
Jr. Highs without youth worker in church:	17%
Jr. Highs unaware of youth worker in church:	15%
Total:	100%
Sr. highs with youth worker in church:	71%
Sr. Highs without youth worker in church:	15%
Sr. Highs unaware of youth worker in church:	14%
Totals:	100%
Post Highs with youth worker in church:	80%
Post Highs without youth worker in church:	20%
Post Highs unaware of youth worker in church:	0%
Total:	100%

Note. The percentages are a percentage of the total numbers in each category who responded to the survey. The total numbers were: junior highs (219), senior highs (171), and post-high (40), for a total of 430.

Questions 4 to 7 were designed to give youth a "voice" expressing their opinions about the importance and nature of the youth worker's role. The following phrases catch their responses as a type of "conversation" with the youth. It is significant to note youth who responded in a negative manner to question 3, which asked: "Does your church have a youth group for your age level? A full 82.05% responded in the affirmative when asked in question 5: "Would you like your church to have a youth worker on staff? Although a simple yes was all that was needed a number of youth emphasized this by saying such things as, "Yes, for my age group." or "I would like to have a youth worker on staff." or "Yes, very much".

Question #4: What, in your opinion, is the most important work this person (youth worker) does?

The LTD (leadership) group at Gull Lake Camp responded in the following categories:

(1) relational 21,
(2) administrative 19,
(3) teach/lead/mentor 19,
(4) counseling 7.

This was the first group of questionnaires to be analyzed, and it proved quite consistent with other participants' common themes and preferred choices. The categories are my own creations. For example, the category "relational" includes comments such as, "The youth worker maintains personal contact," they are someone to "just be there," "someone to talk to," "a friend," "someone who listens," and "someone who interacts with kids."

Question #5: Would you like your church to have a youth worker on staff?

This question had a direct relationship to question #3 which asked "Does your church have a youth worker on staff either full or part-time?" The instructions with question #3 stated that "If you answered 'no' to this question, go to question #5. If you answered 'yes,' skip question #5." The directions seemed clear, and were followed in all but two cases where "yes" was the response to question #3 and these two participants chose to answer question #5. Table 8 shows the results.

Table: 8

Analysis of responses to question: Would you like your church to have a youth worker on staff?

Site		No in #3	Yes in #5	No or unsure
Sylvan Acres	(Jr. High)	15	10	5
	(Sr High)	0	0	0
Keats Is.	(Jr. High)	24	21	3
	(Sr.High)	13	9	4
Gull Lake	(Jr. High)	6	5	1
	(Sr. High)	7	6	1
	(LTD)	5	5	0
BLTS	(Post High)	8	8	0
Totals:		78	64	14

Note. Included above are two groups devoted to leadership education. The LTD group at Gull Lake is a sub-group of the senior highs. These senior-high youth are part of a three-year leadership course. The BLTS group were in residence for one college year for the purpose of leadership development. No one in either group thought it was better to not have a youth worker on staff.

Question #6: In your opinion, what is the most important reason for having a youth worker on a church staff?

There was an obvious close relationship between question # 4, which asked: "What, in your opinion, is the most important work this person does?" and question # 6. Question # 4 sought youth's opinion based upon observation, while question # 6 sought their opinion about the value of having a youth worker on a church staff. For example, one senior high youth at Keats said in #4 " Organizing fun activities for the youth" which is an administration task. However, in response to question 6 this youth said "To work with the youth." which is a more relational task of the youth worker. A grade 12 student at Sylvan Acres camp said in response to #4 "Getting us (youth) involved in the church's activities." In response to #6 this youth said "To disciple us and feed us spiritually." A grade 12 student at Gull Lake made a different distinction. In response to question 4 the statement was made, "Cares for the kids." while in #6 the response was "So the youth feel involved and have something positive to do." Prior testing of the questionnaire determined that respondents would make the distinction, although there would naturally be considerable overlap in the response to the two questions. It was determined that knowledge from youth about the relationship between what is done in action and what is theoretically valued would be helpful.

There was also considerable overlap between the answers given to question # 4 and those given to question # 6, which serves to affirm much of the work youth workers do. Question # 4 revealed that youth see relational matters, administrative work, teaching, mentoring, and counseling as important work for youth workers. For example, typical of many responses was that of a senior high at Keats who said "Organizing fun activities for youth" is the most important work a youth worker does. Another response which was quite typical was that youth workers "Listen to youth". Some youth were very explicit about the teaching role and state that youth workers "Teach us" as being the important work. Others add "Teaches us about God."

The importance of administrative work, teaching, mentoring, and counseling were also revealed in the responses to question # 6 to be areas that youth value. However, other values came out in response to question #6 which were not revealed in the answers to question # 4. Furthermore, some values were made more explicit in the responses in question # 6 than items mentioned in response to question #4. For example one junior high at Keats said in #4 "They help us learn more about God and plan fun events." but in #6 said "They know what the youth want." Another junior high at the same camp said in #4 "The most important thing is to organize fun events." however, in #6 this youth said "To help youth through their problems, provide support and organize fun events that focus around Christian beliefs." One youth at Gull Lake said in #4 "Giving time, energy, planning and organizing youth activity." while in #6 the same youth said "To help lead, guide, and just be there to offer experiences and a listening ear to those who are frustrated or just need to talk. Also to get kids into the idea Christianity can be fun, gain knowledge."

The concept that youth workers could and should be bridges that help adults understand youth was strongly articulated by both junior and senior youth. For example, one senior high youth at Gull Lake said youth workers "help other adults see the youths point of view." A junior high youth at Gull Lake camp said the role of the youth worker was "To voice youth's opinions and bring the adults and the youth together." The value of being a role model was more strongly implied in question # 6 than in question # 4. However, the articulation was more implicit than explicit. The youth include words like "someone to guide", "someone who is there who is a strong Christian to show you how to live," "Be an example" and "someone you can look to."

Relational issues took on more focus in question # 6, and it becomes obvious that youth believe they have problems, questions, and issues that they wish to discuss with and receive guidance from a significant other. Relationships are important because youth wish to relate to someone they can trust and believe will understand them. This was confirmed by many comments such as, "They understand teenagers", "Someone to talk to who is not over 60", "As a person to talk to and someone who is there to help you" , and "Like to do stuff with us." This finding compares with research done by Bibby and Posterski in 1992 throughout high schools in Canada. "Young people want gratifying relationships. They want companionship. They want individuals in their lives who care about what's happening to them" (p.10).

Barna (1995) published Generation Next: What You need to Know About Today's Youth , a book written by the Barna Research Group in late 1994 and early 1995 that gives the results of a nationwide survey, in the United States, of 723 youth ages 13 to 18. This survey was completed just before I surveyed western Canada youth of the same age. Barna discovered that relationships were the number two concern for the youth in the survey (p. 27). Barna comments, "People are more important than organizations, policies, structures or products to the teen." (47).

Another finding was youth's need to be encouraged. They wish to find an encourager in the person of a youth worker. Some youth were very explicit in this area such as the senior high at Keats who said the most important reason for having a youth worker on staff was "To encourage young people." Related to encouragement and the need to have someone to talk to is the self-perception among a number of youth that a youth worker is someone who will understand them. There was little differentiation between junior and senior high youth on these issues.

To illustrate, The analysis of the surveys from all three camps and in all age groups show that youth at every camp and in every age group saw as important that they have youth workers so that there was someone who understood them and they could talk to about problems. Typical of responses was the youth at Keats who said a youth worker is "A person to talk to and someone who is there to help you." A junior high youth at Sylvan Acres said a youth worker is someone who "Helps the youth through the situations that youth face, helping them through the problems." I am confident that anyone who analyzed the data would come to the conclusion that youth want youth workers who understand them and that they can talk to.

One key issue that came out in the survey is that teens perceive that they have problems and issues with which they need help. For example, a junior high youth at Keats put it clearly that the role of the youth worker is "To help people (youth) with their problems." In every age group and site the survey shows that youth are conscious of having problems and that they need help in working through the problems. This finding echoes Barna's research which shows that teens experience a great deal of pressure in their lives. Barna says, "It is important to recognise the growing crisis of stress that is engulfing teenagers" (p. 41). Rainer (1997) agrees that most youth are under considerable stress today.

It should be noted that many youth in this survey had a church connection only through the youth group they attended. Neither they nor their families attended or were members of a church. Nevertheless, the survey was biased towards youth with a church connection. Perhaps, because of this bias, many youth responded to question # 6 by suggesting that youth workers make "church" more fun, more interesting, and aid their spiritual development. "Spiritual development" is a category I created to highlight a variety of expressions used by respondents that showed a desire to develop their "inner" lives. In one comment, for example, a junior youth at Gull Lake said that it is important to have a youth worker "So you can talk to them about what you think about God." More will be said in this chapter dealing with analysis; however, there was a strong weighting towards a desire to develop spiritually while, at the same time, seeing the "church" as unattractive and lacking in understanding of youth.

Question #7: In your opinion, what type of education or training should a youth worker have?

In this area there was a definite differentiation between junior and senior high respondents. The differentiation was more quantitative than qualitative. Junior highs tended to feel that high school and the ability to relate to youth were sufficient to be a successful youth worker. One person, a junior high student at Gull Lake, said about training needed by a youth worker, "None, just as long as they know how to plan things and know how to include everybody." When they did become more explicit their responses were not unlike the senior highs. Besides giving an indication of the level of education a youth worker should have, the youth in the survey clearly indicated the type of education that would be desirable for youth workers. Counseling, psychology, and social work formed a trend. These replies relate to the self-conscious awareness that youth have problems, emotional needs, and face considerable stress. They reflect their needs by expressing concerns about the education that youth workers should have to work well with them. Table 9 shows the most common replies.

Table: 9

The most common responses to the question: In your opinion, what education or training should a youth worker have?

Junior Highs	**Senior High**
good training	education in leadership
college level education	college level education

education in psychology	graduate level education in psychology
university level education	university level education
seminary education	seminary or bible college education
education in counseling	education in counseling
social work	education in communications
	education degree
	education in teaching skills

Questions asked of the Baptist Leadership Training School Students

As noted earlier, 40 students at the Baptist Leadership Training School in Calgary, Alberta, were asked four questions other survey participants were not asked. These students came from various parts of Canada and were enrolled in a one-year leadership program in Calgary. They all had just completed high school and most reported that they would be pursuing careers or various educational pursuits following this year. I was interested to know how many of these students had youth leadership experience before coming to BLTS for their year of leadership education. I was also interested to discover if there might be a relationship between having leadership experience and a desire to choose a career in youth ministry. This group showed a correlation between leadership involvement with youth and a desire to have a career in youth ministry. Table 10 lists the four questions asked of the Baptist leadership Training School students. Table 11 shows the correlation between having had a leadership position during junior or senior high years and the desire for a career in youth ministry.

Table: 10

Questions asked of the Baptist Leadership Training School students.

Question #1 Have you ever been involved in youth leadership?

Question #2 Where did this occur?

Question #3 Were you ever paid for this?

Question #4 Do you have any interest in a career in youth ministry?

Note. I assumed that students at the Baptist Leadership Training School had expressed an interest in leadership by their desire to study in the program for one year. My particular interest and the focus of the questions was to discover what relationship their general interest in leadership might have to the particular focus of working with youth.

Table: 11

The correlation between question # 1 and question # 4.

	Yes	No
Question # 1	31 (77,5%)	9 (22.5%)
Question #4	29 (72.5%)	11 (27.5%)

Note. There appears to be a strong relationship between youth leadership experience in early junior or senior high years and the desire for a career in youth ministry, at least in this group. A closer examination of the data reveals some crossing over from "yes" to "no" and "no" to "yes" from question #1 to question #4. Five who said "yes" to question #1 said "no" to question #4. Three who said "no" to question #1 said "yes" to question #4. In percentages, of those who said "yes" to question # 1, 83.87% said "yes" to question # 4. Of those who said "no" to question # 1, 66.66% said "no" to question #4. This data suggests that the presence of an early leadership experience has strong links to the later desire to translate that experience into a vocation. (I can only speculate that the lack of such an experience in the junior or senior high years has an equally strong link to a lack of desire to translate the experience into a vocation.)

Of particular interest to me were the data accumulated from question # 2 which asked where the experience of involvement in youth leadership occurred. Eleven (27.5%) of the youth identified their church as the site of their leadership experience. Twenty-five (62.5%) identified camp as the site of their leadership experience. Two (5%) identified school as the site of their leadership experience. One (2.5%) identified a community centre as the site of their leadership experience. One (2.5%) youth could not specify a particular site for the leadership experience, except that it was a combination of a school/camp program.

Churches and youth workers interested in leadership development should pay close attention to these findings. It appears that giving junior and senior high youth leadership roles among their peers or with younger children pays later dividends. For example, almost 84% of these youth carry a desire to develop a work with youth. Furthermore, camping ministry appears to be a wonderful place for encouraging such experiences. One person wrote that her experience in leadership camp from a variety of camps over a four year period which included her senior high years.

Interviews with youth workers, reported more fully later in this chapter, relate to these findings in a very positive manner. When youth workers were asked, "What motivated them to want to work with youth?" they all referred to earlier experiences working with youth. One person said , "I came from a difficult home and undergrad years struggling through things I didn't want to struggle through but did. Came from the other side and wanted to help teens avoid some of those pitfalls." He later commented that "My knowledge came from experience in camp and volunteering and not through theoretical courses." I do not believe this survey is large enough to make striking generalizations in this area. However, this area is worth further research for both youth workers and the camping ministry. Maybe more youth have had leadership opportunities in junior or senior high school than were reported here. However, it is probably safe to assume that youth did not see these as explicit leadership opportunities; or these other experiences, if they existed, did not seem relevant.

Clarke and Merriam's research, entitled "Learning from life experience: What makes it significant" (1993), found that, to be significant, a learning experience must personally affect the learner and be subjectively valued by the learner. They defined "personally affecting the learner" as the experience either resulting in an expansion of skills, abilities, sense of self or self-perspective, or a transformation which the learner subjectively names as important in his or her life (p.133). Further research using what Aoki (1984 p.6) calls the situational perspective would help to make further comparisons to Clarke and Merriam's research. The situational perspective is concerned with understanding meaning, relevance, and the perceptions of persons involved in the program. This knowledge would be gained through interviews and a process using more dialogue. For now, the data and the numerical indicators suggest a rich area for exploration in youth work.

Workshops with Youth Workers

In late 1994 and through early 1995, I held four research workshops for youth workers in Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton, and Regina. The total number of youth workers involved in the workshops was 89. That total included 60 men and 29 women. By regions, the breakdown was Vancouver 14, Calgary 49, Edmonton 19, and Regina 7. Although all 89 participants were involved in church youth work, not all were from the same denomination. The youth workers represented camps, local church ministries, and interdenominational ministries.

To obtain a rich, yet concrete, description of youth ministries youth workers were put into small groups of 4 to 5 persons. Each group was asked to describe their present work and to frame a description within the following categories: what they did, where they did their work, how they did their work, and why they did what they did. If one person in a group was involved in a novel activity, that activity was listed. Also, if several were involved in the same activity, it was listed only once.

Once these groups finished, their lists were shared in a plenary session where duplications were noted and a common list constructed. The same process was repeated using the identical categories of what, where, how, and why. However, the second time, groups were to address the ideal. The scenario was, If you could have things your way in an ideal world, what would your descriptions look like? Again, groups shared individual lists and a common list was formed.

Following a lunch break groups reformed and were presented with the common list. They were then challenged to form goals which could help bridge the gap between what is and what they would target as the ideal. Once a list of goals was formed, duplications noted and eliminated, each person cast three votes to establish a priority list. A person who felt strongly about a certain goal could give it 1 or all 3 votes.

Once priorities were noted, participants were asked to suggest how these goals could be achieved through curriculum. The groups' tendencies were to suggest particular courses which could be offered. Participants knew at the beginning of the workshop that information gathered during the workshop would be used to help formulate curriculum for the education of youth workers.

The next few pages present an analysis of the data received at each workshop. Although there were several small groups, as many as nine in one workshop, the data presented is a compilation of all groups. Comments have been carefully examined so that, under any one category, individual comments are recorded minus any repeat comments. For example, all nine groups might have reported that they organize youth events, but the comment would only appear once in the data recorded.

WORKSHOP DATA

Workshop # 1 Calgary

Present Situation Described:

What: (What activities do you undertake in your youth work?)

1. Counseled at camp
2. Crisis counseling
3. Teach at and lead youth events
4. Administration (planning, coordinate events, phoning, organizing)
5. Working with parents
6. Communications
7. Training and developing youth and leaders
8. Reading/ research
9. Preaching
10. Prayer
11. Work in a high school
12. Recruiting volunteers
13. Discipling
14. Building a vision of what a youth program should be
15. Sports events
16. Bible studies
17. Training adult volunteers
18. Supervision of youth events
19. Building relationships with youth and parents
20. Building a safe environment for youth
21. Meeting one on one with youth
22. Lead worship
23. Network with other youth workers
24. Plan mission trips
25. Attend youth sporting events
26. Special weekend trips

Where: (Name sites where you spend time with youth.)

1. Camp
2. Church
3. School
4. Office
5. Homes
6. Restaurants (especially fast food)
7. Recreation facilities
8. Entertainment centres
9. Malls
10. Streets
11. Drop-in centres
12. Retreats
13. Jail/courthouse
14. Community centres

How: (How do you do your work with youth?)

1. One-on-One
2. Small group
3. Large group
4. Integrated programs with other churches
5. Go for coffee
6. Drama
7. Relating to their interests
8. Listening
9. Through building relationships
10. Organizing events
11. Praying together
12. Discipling
13. Volunteering at schools
14. Being available
15. Street ministry
16. Involvement with different city agencies
17. Seminars
18. Networking with other youth

workers

19. Phoning
20. Teaching
21. Youth drop-in centre
22. Coaching sports

Why: (What motivates you to do youth work?)

1. Christ's example
2. Love of others
3. Enjoyment
4. Fulfillment
5. Love for youth
6. See lives changed positively
7. Good way to deal with personal past by helping others
9. It's fun
10. Desire to help kids develop mentally, spiritually, emotionally, and socially
11. To share Christ with them
12. Impact that other youth workers have had on you
13. To train leaders
14. Impact this generation
15. To be available to kids
16. To give direction
17. To be a friend and encourager
18. To contribute to society

The Target (Ideal) Situation Described

What: (Describe what would make youth work more ideal.)

1. To have an adequate salary to support a family
2. To have a very supportive board/church family towards youth
3. Freedom to try new things, a decent budget, lots of kids
4. Training (continuing education)
5. Good materials and resources
6. Good communication
7. A supportive senior pastor
8. Share responsibilities of administration
9. Bring youth to a maturity in Christ
10. More time with youth and their families
11. To give youth opportunities that will challenge them
12. More female youth pastors
13. More laity involved
14. Bridge gap between leaders and youth by developing cell groups
15. More trained young adults, more outreach to target groups
16. Youth room designed by youth
17. Peer support system
18. Leadership training

Where: (Where would you like to spend time with youth?)

1. Have a comfortable, approachable, accessible place to meet teens
2. A quiet place to work
3. A youth centre
4. High school setting

5. Have an office/drop in centre in a strip mall
6. Have a gym/warehouse
7. Camp and retreat centres
8. Coffee house
9. Wilderness setting

How: (Describe how youth work would look in an ideal situation.)

1. Work in teams
2. Have support staff
3. Create an environment that is comfortable for nonchurch kids
4. More support from the church
5. Willingness of church to let youth lead in the church
6. Bible studies
7. Meaningful programming
8. People who care enough to help youth to meet their basic needs
9. Establish relationships
10. Work one on one
11. Summer camps
12. More retreats
13. Leadership training
14. More educational material
15. Have a philosophy of ministry
16. More interaction between generations
17. Build up the family

Why: (Ideally why would you work with youth?)

1. Vision for youth ministry
2. A calling
3. Meet needs of teens
4. Love of God
5. Able to relate with youth
6. Youth have a distinct culture
7. Help youth
8. Believe in themselves

9. Enjoy working with kids
10. To find purpose and fulfillment

Workshop# 2 Edmonton

Present Situation Described

What: (What activities do you undertake in your youth work?)

1. Disciple
2. Follow-up work
3. Build relationships
4. Establish and develop programs and resources
5. Teaching
6. Leadership training with teen leaders and interns
7. Counseling
8. Visitation
9. Building bridges between youth and church volunteers
10. Involving youth in outreach projects
11. Lots of meetings
12. Music and band
13. Write music
14. Recruitment of leaders
15. Organize social activities
16. Meet with parents
17. Lead in worship
18. Plan service projects
19. Administration
20. Teaching a small group

21 Planning and evaluating with parent committee

Where: (Name sites where you spend time with youth.)

1. Eden's Gate (an inter-church music and leadership development program
2. Camps
3. High schools
4. Restaurants
5. Church
6. Homes
7. Malls
8. Detention centres
9. Mustardseed (street ministry centre)
10. University
11. Parks
12. Office

How: (How do you do your work with youth?)

1. Phone calls
2. Letters
3. One-on-one relationships
4. Three-on-three basketball
5. Weekly events
6. Large youth rallies
7. Car rallies
8. Out trips, camps, retreats
9. In-school ministries
10. Special trips (ski trips, mission trips)
11. Parties
12. School dances
13. Equipping leaders
14. Administration
15. Counseling
16. Going to sports events, plays, and concerts involving the youth
17. Networking with other leaders
18. Preparation through study and reading

Why: (What motivates you to do youth work?)

1. Because youth need direction
2. Evangelism
3. Need for youth to experience personal growth
4. Love of youth
5. Offer alternative and safe activities
6. Concern for their future
7. God's calling
8. To invest in the future of society and the Kingdom of God
9. For my own renewal

The Target (Ideal) Situation Described:

What: (Describe what would make youth work more ideal.)

1. Visit more
2. Hangout more with youth
3. Have a developed support structure (especially peer related)
4. Incorporation of the family into youth ministry
5. Unity between youth and the rest of the church
6. A larger youth resource budget
7. Fewer meetings
8. More holiday time
9. Inter- church groups such as Eden's Gate
10. Continuing education
11. Service projects and mission trips
12. To be able to work full time with youth
13. Youth centre
14. Parent support groups
15. Youth resource centre for youth

and leaders

16. Adventure out trips

Where: (Where would you like to spend time with youth?)

1. Office in the high school
2. Youth lounge
3. Public school
4. Restaurants
5. Internet contact
6. Camps
7. Sporting events
8. Homes
9. Community-based youth centre

How: (Describe how youth work would look in an ideal situation.)

1. Through personal relationships
2. Variety of events in which the youth to leader ratio is good
3. Equip leaders to do youth ministry
4. Better financial support from the church
5. Newsletter
6. More church involvement in extra-curricular activities at schools

Why: (Ideally why would you work with youth?)

1. Because it is important to the whole church that there is a good youth ministry
2. Heart for youth
3. God's calling
4. Help youth grow spiritually
5. Proper use of talents

Workshop # 3 Vancouver

Present Situation Described

What: (What activities do you undertake in your youth work?)

1. Cook and cater
2. Drive buses and vans
3. Train leaders
4. Lead worship
5. Involved in music and drama
6. Counseling
7. Teaching Bible studies and parent groups
8. Administration
9. Discipling youth
10. Programming
11. Planning curriculum
12. Speaking
13. Rock climbing
14. Promotion and advertizing
15. One-on-one relationships
16. Sunday School
17. Concerts
18. Service projects
19. Involvement at high school
20. Leadership development
21. Mentoring

Where: (Name sites where you spend time with youth.)

1. On the streets
2. Community drop-in centre
3. On the phone
4. At church
5. In homes
6. Restaurants
7. Schools
8. Camps and wilderness settings
9. Malls
10. Amusement parks

11. Sports venues
12. Coffee shops

How: (How do you do your work with youth?)

1. Counseling
2. Discussion groups
3. Administration
4. Planning budgets
5. Fundraising
6. Using planning skills and promotional skills
7. Listening
8. Refereeing in sports
9. Vision-casting
10. Recruitment of volunteers

Why: (What motivates you to do youth work?)

1. Can make a difference in lives of youth
2. God's call
3. Sense of urgency to reach teens
4. Youth ministry is a service opportunity available to young adults
5. Never a dull moment, see the need, reach and help families
6. I like kids
7. A sense of fulfillment

The Target (Ideal) Situation Described:

What: (Describe what would make youth work more ideal.)

1. Eliminate a lot of busy work
2. Focus on people
3. Quality preparation for key tasks
4. Good personal preparation
5. Help families
6. Whole-family ministry events
7. More retreats
8. Leadership development
9. Prayer
10. More time with youth on a one on one basis
11. Less administration
12. More time for vision planning

Where: (Where would you like to spend time with youth?)

1. Less in the church
2. Less in the office
3. Anywhere youth are
4. Retreat centres

How: (Describe how youth work would look in an ideal situation.)

1. Use of a good computer
2. Access to in-service training
3. Adequate budget
4. Youth worker networks
5. Develop programs that are more need-oriented
6. Adequate staff
7. A budget for interns
8. Develop a better relationship with church leaders

9. Promote youth ministry in the general church population
10. Team building
11. Time management
12. Professional counseling skills
13. Being mentored
14. Cross-generational skills

Why: (Ideally why would you work with youth?)

1. Because we want to do it better
2. Show that the church actually cares and supports

Workshop # 4 Regina

The Present Situation Described

What: (What activities do you undertake in your youth work?)

1. Lead Bible studies and worship teams
2. Coach sports
3. Counseling and pastoral care of youth
4. Weekly visitation
5. Lead drama and ministry groups
6. Organize and promote weekly activities
7. Meet and plan with denominational and interdenominational youth committees
8. Staff meetings
9. Organize retreats and summer ministry trips
10. Training youth interns
11. Parents' meetings
12. Teach youth Sunday School, attend school activities, and fundraising

Where: (Name sites where you spend time with youth.)

1. At our church or other churches
2. Camps
3. Buses
4. Coffee shops
5. Fast-food restaurants
6. High schools
7. Gyms
8. Parks

How: (How do you do your work with youth?)

1. One-on-one
2. phoning for promotion
3. using computers
4. big groups
5. monthly meetings with youth workers
6. keeping records
7. recruiting parent volunteers
8. prayer letters
9. fundraising,

Why: (What motivates you to do youth work?)

1. It's our job and we love it
2. Fundraise because we are never given enough resources to do the job
3. To meet needs
4. Provide healthy activities and social events for youth
5. To disciple youth
6. To support parents
7. To teach youth to be responsible Christians
8. Because we love them - the youth

The Target Situation Described

What: (Describe what would make youth work more ideal.)

1. Through education give more ownership to youth sponsors
2. Challenge youth more, don't just entertain them
3. Give youth more ministry opportunities
4. Educate parents on youth ministry and popular culture
5. Encourage parents
6. More retreats
7. Get into the schools to discover what is going on (more contact with teachers)
8. Less restriction in office hours
9. Spend more time doing one-on-one with youth, attend school activities

Where: (Where would you like to spend time with youth?)

1. In school
2. In church gym
3. At places of their activities
4. Camps/outdoors
5. More community activities

How: (Describe how youth work would look in an ideal situation.)

1. Have every kid have an email account
2. More organized
3. More parent involvement and support
4. More biblical base
5. Have access to other youth groups for ideas, games, etc.
6. Access to information on popular culture
7. Be involved in many of their activities
8. Communicate our job descriptions to the church
9. Delegate more

Why: (Ideally why would you work with youth?)

1. To keep up on youth culture
2. Work with and support parents
3. To be available
4. To teach about Christ
5. To get youth through teenage years in a positive manner

Bridging the Gap Between the Present and the Ideal and How Curriculum Might Help

The top areas noted by participants in each workshop and which were seen to be valuable for moving from the present situation of youth work to a more ideal situation are listed in their workshop categories. Second, overlaps between workshops are noted. These overlaps form common ground among the participants. Third, goals are addressed in terms of possible courses in a curriculum of study for youth workers.

At the first workshop I observed that participants would not express curriculum needs in articulate language. This task was left to me, both within the workshop and later, as I reflected upon their goals. Not all goals could be met by designing courses or educational resources within a curriculum.

The main goals from each workshop are listed below. Curriculum suggestions for each goal are listed in bold type where applicable.

Vancouver Workshop

(1) An emphasis upon spiritual formation for youth workers. The group consensus was that there should be some way to examine one's own spiritual life. This should include work with a mentor, an accountability group, and some of the youth the youth worker is mentoring. **(A course on spiritual formation.)**

(2) The ability to reproduce one's self and vision in others. Two comments came as consensus from the group. "We have to be able to build vision within people of all ages." and "We need to transfer our passion and be able to communicate feelings to others." **(A**

course on leadership development.)

(3) The development of a more specific strategy for doing youth ministry. A group consensus was that youth workers need to become more professional and need ways to mature in their work. **(A course on administration.)**

(4) More collaboration with parents in the ministry to youth. This area was articulated in the consensus statement that " Better communication is needed with parents of youth because youth ministry is family ministry. Youth ministry is a team ministry with parents." **(A course on family ministry.)**

Edmonton Workshop

(1) Building relationships with youth, parents, and the church. One group consensus comment related to the task of "Educating church to give priority and integration to youth ministry." another similar comment was "Build relationships with parents, youth, and the church." **(Some of these goals could be addressed in a course on communications and others in a course on family ministry.)**

(2) Educating the church to give priority to youth ministry. The youth workers in the Edmonton workshop saw a strong need for youth workers to educate the church. Of sixteen consensus statements five began with the phrase "educate the entire church." **(This goal can be assisted through a communications course and a course on teaching.)**

(3) Have a mentorship program for youth workers. In the workshop groups, mentoring was explicitly dealt with by the statement that "Mentoring: - as a part of training- to

negotiate change process-accountability/spiritual development-support/encouragement." In the consensus statements this came out as, "Educate youth workers through qualified and effective mentoring." **(This goal expresses resources needed within a curriculum. A mentorship program needs to be established for each youth worker.)**

(4) An emphasis upon spiritual formation for youth workers. In the consensus statement this area was separated from mentoring. As seen in one of the group statements quoted above it was part of the mentoring process. In the consensus statements it was merely put as "Personal spiritual formation of youth worker" The larger group saw its importance but was not clear about how it good best be accomplished. **(A course on spiritual formation.)**

Regina Workshop

(1) Disciple youth so that they can disciple others. The consensus comment was "Disciple youth to disciple others." The process of "discipling" is unclear when used by youth workers. Sometimes it appears that they are referring to what is best termed spiritual formation. At other times it sounds like they are dealing with matters pertaining to teaching others. In reflection with this group it was clear that they were expressing a desire to lead youth in a manner that would be transferable so that the youth, in turn, would lead others. This might include matters of spiritual formation and teaching but clearly demanded leadership skills and knowledge. **(A leadership development course needs to be established.)**

(2) Educate parents in areas such as popular culture and adolescent development. The

previous sentence is exactly how the group expressed its concern. The desire was to bridge the gap between youth and parents and increase the level of understanding and knowledge parents have about their youth. This group also formed a consensus statement which targeted themselves. They said, "It is important that the youth worker be culturally attuned". **(This goal assumes knowledge in two areas, popular culture and adolescent development. Courses need to be established in both of these areas.)**

(3) How to work within a structure and on a team. The group was very conscious of the need to know how to work within the structure of the local church. They see it as a system and recognize that youth workers often have difficulty working within the system and knowing how to be accountable. **(A course on administration would address these concerns.)**

Calgary Workshop

(1) Train youth to become peer leaders and peer counselors. The consensus statement in this area of the Calgary group was "Train youth to become peer leaders and peer counselors - build leaders". In order to accomplish this with youth workers need to understand the dynamics of leadership development. **(A course on leadership development needs to be established.)**

(2) How to communicate with youth on a deeper level and educate the church about the importance of youth ministry. There were several consensus statements developed which addressed concerns in this area. One was "To build clear communication of youth needs to the church- culture, finances, time, and involvement". Another was "Communicate

specific vision to follow". and also "Communicate with youth on a deeper level and with the church on the importance and value of youth". **(This goal could be assisted by courses in both communication and teaching.)**

(3) Clear communication of youth needs to the church. (see comments in #2) **(A course on communication would be helpful.)**

(4) How to work on a team. The consensus comment in this area was "Build team ministry rather than 'lone ranger' youth leader". This theme was also reflected in the Regina workshop. Youth workers are conscious that in the church they work in a structure and with other staff. They appear unclear about how to make the system work or how they best work within the system. **(A course on administration could address this goal.)**

One goal of curriculum is to help youth workers create a more ideal situation. Data from the workshops highlight some directions youth workers believe are important. If we eliminate overlaps between the workshops, nine themes emerge, themes which can give direction about the type of written curriculum that best affirms the actual experience of being a youth worker. Eight of these themes can be addressed by creating courses and one by creating a program within the curriculum. Six of the nine themes were listed as priorities in more than one workshop. The nine themes are: (1) spiritual formation, (2) leadership development, (3) administration, (4) family ministry, (5) communications, (6) teaching, (7) cultural connectedness, (8) counseling, and (9) mentorship. They are described in more detail on pages 140 to 149.

The Voice of Youth Workers

One rich experience on my journey to design curriculum for the education of youth workers has been the many opportunities I have had to spend time, especially one-on-one with youth workers. I find youth workers exciting to be with and to share dialogue about their work and compassion for youth. Few youth workers I encountered failed to demonstrate a passion for their work and a compassion for youth.

The youth workers I interviewed were special persons. All volunteered to be interviewed out of their experience of participating in the research workshops I conducted. Through my own inquiries I knew their supervisors and peers viewed them as competent. They also displayed an interest in my research. The research project itself, apart from any results, seemed to affirm them personally, what they were doing, and, perhaps, placed value on their work.

Although most of the youth workers feel stretched, they seem challenged and highly committed to their work. They like youth and enjoy interactions with them. The voices of youth workers, heard through the interviews, bring a rich history to the process of learning. Their motivation to learn and work with youth is rooted in their own history. For some, their history is one of painful memories which prompted their desire to help other youth. The voices of youth, expressed in these surveys, echo this pain. The survey data also shows the plea of youth for youth workers who understand. The memory youth workers have of their own youth, whether painful or otherwise, forms an experience which can be used to build both the knowledge and the desire to know more.

The Interviews

I interviewed six youth workers. I originally planned to interview eight to ten: but, I discovered, in this combination of six youth workers, a gender mix, an educational mix, and a contextual working-place mix that yielded a rich source of data. As a result, in consultation with my supervisor, I decided to stay with the material produced by these six interviews. Two of the six were females; four were males. The six youth workers interviewed had a varied educational history. One male youth worker had completed a graduate degree. One male and one female youth worker had completed undergraduate degrees. One female youth worker had completed an undergraduate degree and was working on a graduate degree. Two male youth workers had done some undergraduate work but had no completed degrees.

One issue which prompted me to research youth worker curriculum was the lack of any standardized or core curriculum for the education of youth workers. An informal survey by Dr. Brian Stelck of Carey Theological College of about forty youth workers working in churches across Western Canada showed that the six youth workers here are representative of the variety of educational backgrounds found among youth workers.

The workers also were employed in a variety of contexts. All were employed by churches and all worked in urban areas. Two male workers were from Vancouver Island. One was involved in inner-city ministry and the other was involved in a suburban ministry. One female and one male worker were involved in ministries in Edmonton. One worked in a suburban church ministry and a high school ministry. The other was involved in an inner-city church ministry and a university campus ministry. One male youth worker was involved in a small-city ministry in Alberta. The other female youth worker was involved in a large suburban church in Regina.

The interviews were all taped with the permission of the participants and the tapes were transcribed. The interviews involved several basic questions, but also included open-ended and follow-up questions in some cases. However, the basic format was similar in all the interviews. As a result, a strong basis for comparison was established between the six interviews.

What the Data Revealed

Question # 1: What has motivated you to want to work with youth?

The data revealed that motivation to do youth work emerged from the lived-experience of being involved in youth work. As noted earlier, Clarke and Merriam, in a research project designed to discover what makes some life experiences significant for learning, discovered that if the experience personally affects the learner and is subjectively valued then it can become transformational (1993 p.133). Subjectively valued here means that the learner sees the experience and names it as important.

Youth workers' response to the first question reveal that a life experience spurred their desire to work with youth. One male said, "I came from a difficult home and undergrad years struggling through things I didn't want to struggle through, but did. I came from the other side and wanted to help teens avoid some of those pitfalls." There is a certain amount of pain reflected in the statement of this youth worker. Clarke and Merriam comment on the relationship of a painful experience to learning:

> The learning may not always have been pleasant or easy, and in fact there may have been considerable pain accompanying the experience. Most of the more sudden transformations that our interviewees reported occurred as a result of a particularly difficult, tragic, or painful experience...(p.138).

Although some youth workers do not name a painful experience that led to a transformation in their lives, they are keenly aware that such a transformation took place. One male youth worker responded to question one by saying that he was motivated to work with youth "...to see young lives changed by Christ." He went on to say that "I've seen a lot of young people transformed by the truth." He did not say why or how this transformation took place in young people's lives. I believe it would be helpful for him and others to learn critical reflection through a youth workers' curriculum. He did, however, come close to a realization when he later said, "I was personally impacted by youth workers as a young person." This comment reflects a sense that his motivation began in some past life experience.

Some cultural codes make it difficult to see personal possibilities. Some of these codes are gender-based, as in the case of one female youth worker who had an opportunity to work with youth but did not discover her real desire until a later experience broke the codes. After having traveled the world for three years in a singing group, she returned to California and made an amazing discovery. "In 1986, the youth pastor at our church asked if I would be the junior high intern. It was then and there that I knew what I wanted to do. I never thought that a woman, especially in the denomination I grew up in, could be a youth pastor."

This young woman has since completed undergraduate work and is involved in graduate studies. She has never ceased to be a youth worker during the past ten years. Her experience was transformational and brought new meaning for her life. Other youth workers interviewed note that their motivation for youth work arose from one or more life experiences. For all, these experiences were significant; for some, the experiences were transformational.

Question #2: What training have you received which has particularly helped you in your work with youth?

This question attempted to help youth workers reflect on how they have gained knowledge applicable to their work. One young male worker responded as if he had been waiting for this question. He said, "Knowledge came from experience in camp and volunteering and not through theoretical courses." I soon learned that this conviction reflected a bias towards "hands-on" learning. He soon revealed that his own experience was somewhat different from his opening statement and shared that he had taken a course in marriage and family counseling and another in adolescent development which were helpful.

It was interesting to me that, of all the youth workers, he was the most assertive that learning should be experientially-based; yet, he was the only participant with a graduate degree. Perhaps the clue is found in Clarke and Merriam's research which notes that "All of life experience-and we consider formal education as one of life's experiences-has the potential to be a significant learning experience. For learning to occur, the experience must be attended to and reflected upon" (p.136). This youth worker was able to see the value of life experience in learning but as yet did not consciously include formal learning in that category. It may also be that, because he had not reflected upon his formal education, little learning had occurred from that experience.

Experience loomed large in the minds of youth workers as they responded to question two. Another youth worker said that "A lot of my training has been through experience, although I have a bachelor's degree which has helped some." He added that "Formal education is a good foundation but in terms of knowing what to do and when that's more of a natural thing that has come through experience." It is difficult to measure the differential between seeing an experience as significant and determining how much learning, if any, has taken place because of that experience. The statement about formal education being a good foundation but experience being better for applied knowledge or practice merits consideration. However, it is clear that the youth worker making this statement values experience as a basis for learning.

One female youth worker said that "Work experience, along with going to school, has been very helpful. I would not have remembered half of what I did if not for the opportunity to apply it every day." She attended college or university while doing youth work. Her experience echoes the answers most youth workers gave in question five "Would you prefer to receive your training in a college or university setting or more on-site?" Most desired a blending of the two. None seemed to opt for just one and not the other. What also surfaced, in response to question two, was that some youth workers had been mentored by someone with more experience and valued this learning experience. Later in the interview, they were asked whether they had ever had a mentor. However, the topic surfaced earlier in some cases. One final comment about helpful forms of education came from another female youth worker who noted: "I have a degree in English from university. Basically it has been on-site since age 18. I worked under youth pastors, volunteers, and paid staff of a church. It has become natural. I have attended seminars but just doing it is the best education and training."

A degree in English can be a valuable foundation for many careers. However, it is probably not the first degree that occurs to most seeking a career in youth work. The question might arise, "What degree would be preferable?" Few degrees center upon careers in youth work, although some have arisen in the last few years. Some of these are at the graduate level and a few are undergraduate degrees. However, none I know are based on curriculum research centered in the world of youth and youth workers. The challenge for educators and designers of curriculum is "How do we partner with youth workers, like this young woman, and form some core curriculum which will enhance their world of youth work?" This essential research question is one I hope to answer in the curriculum put forth in Appendix A.

Questions three and four of the interviews were designed to help youth workers reflect upon their present situation and the possibility of improving the present in the future. Groome (1989) sees such a movement or action as very important. The exercise, or action, taking place is one of critical reflection whose purpose is to fully understand the present action we are involved in. This present action involves everything we do which is intentional or deliberate. The reflection leads to vision and the improvement or development of the present in the future. Groome not only sees this as praxis but, when we are engaged in such a process with others, it is a shared praxis.

Question #3: What components of your job do you feel the least equipped to handle?

I hoped the responses and discussion around these questions would clearly indicate needs that curriculum could, in part, answer. The question asked for reflection on the present lived-experience of the youth worker. It also asked them to name a "lack" in their experience of working with youth -- an area where more knowledge is needed and learning must occur.

Question #4: If you were designing a curriculum to train youth workers, such as yourself, what top three priorities would the courses address?

Question four was a very direct question about curriculum. It might appear, on the surface, that the interview could be reduced to just this question. Indeed some existing curricula seems based merely upon such a response to the hidden agenda. "Tell us what you want and we will deliver it." The question highlights a consumer orientation. Question four was deliberately not set off by itself and it is intentionally placed after a question which causes the youth worker to reflect on his or her "present" experience. The purpose of this question was to encourage the youth worker to reflect on the future question: "What could be in a more ideal world?"

One might expect that responses to question four would mirror responses in question three. The areas lacking in number three would be covered by the courses named in number four. This was not the case. Clearly, in answering question number three, the youth workers reflected upon their own lived experience and a sense of their lack in some areas of their work with youth. In number four they thought more universally about youth work and about what would be good for youth workers generally and not just themselves personally. Both sets of responses help form curriculum, but for different reasons.

One area of struggle and challenge for youth workers is working with families and understanding how families work, or do not work. One youth worker expressed it this way, "The whole breakdown of family is the most difficult and hard to bridge as an outsider. Teens really struggle with communications with the family." One female youth worker said "I would like to teach parents of youth because I have something to offer, but I am not looked upon as equipped because I am a kid." She wanted to discuss this topic following the formal interview and, in response to my question, "What do you see yourself doing with parents?" said, "Teach a parenting class. Youth workers see kids from a different angle than parents. I know kids who are headed for trouble, but parents cannot see this. Parents are not always open. They see their kids in the light in which they want to see them." The youth surveys clearly suggest that many teens want youth workers to help them bridge a gap to their parents.

This bridge is a site for curriculum work. In each workshop, I heard this same theme and began to work with youth workers to help them make explicit matters which were still somewhat hidden. I would ask questions like, "Can you do youth work and not work with families?" or "When you work with teens, do you sense that you touch families at some of their rawest points?" I asked one young woman "Do you see the possibility that youth workers could become family workers?" Her response was "Yes. You are already working with half the family. You need to see the whole family -- the whole spectrum."

Youth workers obviously struggle with the tension between teens and family. Youth workers are by definition, and definitions which the church and educators give to them, seen in a narrow focus. They are merely "youth workers." However, you cannot touch youth without contacting the family of that youth. Barna (1995) notes that it is interesting who teens turn to for reliable and useful guidance. "Tops on the list, by a wide margin, is Mom" (p.64). Family is a present and important reality for youth, but it is also different than it was only a decade ago.

The youth worker will contact families although the contact may not be an actual interchange with the family. However, the whole family context will be present in the youth. Therefore, youth workers need to gain knowledge about families, their structures, their meanings, and how they function. Barna (1995) notes that the traditional family has been described as all people related to each other by marriage, birth, or adoption. This, for many, is no longer the definition. The new definition is used to describe any and all individuals whom we deeply care for and also those who deeply care for us. My encounters with youth suggest the use of this expanded definition of family. Individuals are even given family names, such as gramma or uncle, who have no marriage or birth ties to the one using those names.

Churches and church leaders who employ youth workers need to become more conscious of a holistic context of youth work and surround the youth ministry with family ministries. Although several interviewees pointed to family life as an area of struggle, and this was born out in the workshops, only one named it as an area for curriculum design in question four. The youth workers themselves have not considered some of the hiddeness of youth work. I refer to hiddeness here in the sense of the hidden curriculum in any educational institution or classroom. If you are in youth work, you are in family work. In a formal sense, as often described in job descriptions, youth workers are just youth workers; and, the curriculum often reflects such a state. However, if you work with youth, you encounter and work with families. Any curriculum which seeks to serve youth workers and their development must make the "hiddeness" of family life explicit in the curriculum.

During my research I have had the opportunity to work closely with two theological institutions, Carey Theological College in Vancouver and Edmonton Baptist Seminary in Edmonton. Both institutions have, during that same time, implemented programs for youth workers. Carey Theological College has implemented a Certificate in Ministry/Youth Ministry Track. This program can be taken by undergraduates and is a distance education model. One core course is Family and Counseling. Edmonton Baptist Seminary has been even more explicit in its new Master of Divinity program entitled Youth and Family Ministry Concentration. Both institutions have taken seriously the necessary connection between youth and family ministry demonstrated in my research.

Another area noted by youth workers where they sense a lack in their education is the equipping and leadership development of others. Many youth leaders are expected to work in team situations and with volunteers. They often are responsible for coordinating the activities of these other people as well as educating them in leadership with youth. One youth worker put it well when he said, "I have been trained to do management and programs but the training, equipping, and reproducing of other leaders, a major role of mine, is not something that I have had in my formal training." The workshops and interviews with youth workers suggest that, for many, this is a major expectation and one which many feel ill equipped to fulfill. Curriculum needs to address this issue for them.

Youth workers also do a great amount of administration. They plan programs, coordinate activities, schedule activities, discover resources, order and schedule resources, record their work with youth, and report programs to boards. Many feel that they have not received adequate education in this area; yet, it is an expectation. Parents and other leaders usually expect that the youth ministry is well-organized and not haphazard in any way. One youth worker identified the need to "...know how to keep current with resources, programs, and relationships." Another identified that she had a problem in administration. She also said that "I hear this from a lot of youth pastor friends." This particular youth worker was aided by a one-year mentorship with a male Associate Pastor who was particularly knowledgeable in administration and also by a one-year mentorship with a female business woman in her church. Administration, as it relates to youth work, is an area where courses could be designed in a curriculum for youth workers.

Youth workers are also thrown into informal and formal counseling situations. The survey done among junior and senior highs suggests that youth want a youth worker they can talk to about their lives, questions, and problems. This means that youth workers face many counseling situations. One female youth worker reflected this challenge vividly when she said, "Counseling is part of what I enjoy the most, but, in really tough issues -- whether suicide, pregnancy, or really serious family issues -- I realize the lack of education in counseling issues. I am looking for this help in my master's program. I realize my lack in this area so I refer to professionals."

This wise young woman has taken time to discover counseling networks so that she can refer to professionals. However, like many colleagues she is faced with significant counseling issues and realizes her lack of education. Since youth workers are often in informal settings with youth, the boundaries between being a friend versus being a counselor are not clear. I have discovered that many youth workers are not cognizant of boundaries nor how and when boundaries should be set. The balance between a professional role and being a friend (a strong expectation of youth about youth workers) is often not clear.

Based upon the data, it is my opinion that all youth workers receive formal educational help in the area of counseling and related matters such as the setting of boundaries in relationships. Courses in counseling need to be designed and tailored to fit the particular needs of youth workers. Such courses need to be related to adolescent development, which sets a context for the counseling course. In courses on adolescent development and on family, the youth worker better learns to anticipate prime areas where counseling needs will arise. Planning to be a counselor is more preferred than just stumbling upon counseling needs as one relates to youth. The latter can become overwhelming.

Another area where youth workers are aware of educational needs is communication. One youth worker emphatically responded to question four on top priorities in curriculum by saying: "Communication -- and this would be the how to's of communicating with youth, youth leaders, and parents." The workshop and interview data are clear: youth workers are involved in many facets of communication. They need to keep data bases. They often advertise events and programs, and some produce newsletters. Many are expected to regularly teach and speak in public. Yet, here is an area where many lack formal education. Courses need to be designed to address the communication needs and expand the skills of youth workers. Youth workers are relating to a generation of youth highly skilled in computer technology and visual in the way they communicate.

Rainer (1997) compares the adolescent generation of today and the boomer generation. One huge difference is in the area of media and communications. Many of the younger generation have grown up using computers and with internet access. Few older people had computers in their adolescent years and many still do not have internet access. The younger generation has had almost unlimited access to movies, compared to an older generation. The television options also seem unlimited compared to those when the boomer generation were adolescents.

When we touch communication we touch the edge of one of the largest areas of "hiddeness" in youth ministry -- the area of youth culture or, in more appropriate terms, Popular Culture. Communication does not take place within a vacuum. Instead messages are sent and received, and coded and decoded within a context. Context is largely a cultural structure; and if one attends to communication, he or she must attend to the culture of those with whom he or she wishes to communicate.

The area of youth culture is implicit in the data received in the workshops and interviews. Although much is said and written about youth culture, the literature has not been taken seriously by churches and those interested in youth work. I recently reviewed a book, The Church Between Gospel and Culture: The Emerging Mission in North America edited by George R. Hunsberger and Craig Van Gelder (1996). In the entire book, which is scholarly and well-researched, nothing significant is said about youth or popular culture. Yet Mcrobbie (1994) reminds us of the importance of following youth and their culture. She says, "We are thus starkly reminded of the extent to which young people tell us a good deal about the scale and the dynamics of social change itself" (p. 179).

I noted the implicit reference versus explicit reference to popular culture in the workshops and, towards the end, I asked participants if they were aware that they were involved in cross-cultural ministry. This question always precipitated a vigorous discussion and the common assertion that they were in cross-cultural ministry but had not recognized it as such. One young woman in a workshop, told me at a break that she was only 23 but could hardly keep up with the meaning of language used by the high schoolers she worked with. She had to work to keep current with the latest music being listened to by the youth. She felt a big gap between herself and the youth.

Youth workers readily admit they are in cross-cultural work. I have yet to encounter a youth worker who disputes that assertion. Yet, many youth workers are not aware of how popular culture is formed, its relationship to the dominant culture, its ability to invade other cultures, its relationship to the media, its relationship to music, and its power to shape other more dominant cultures. Many youth workers are in the midst of a conflict in churches where they work; but, neither they nor the churches name the conflict as one of culture. Instead the conflict is seen to be one of worship styles or one described as formality versus informality. But, the cultural differences are much deeper, and primarily concern music and a broader postmodern approach versus the rationalistic-modernist approach.

Courses need to be designed to help youth workers become knowledgeable about popular culture and how one works cross-culturally. These courses need to deal with issues of postmodernism which forms a larger context of change in our world today. Grenz (1996) is helping the Christian community face the issues of postmodernity. Grenz claims that

> Although philosophers such as Derrida, Foucault, and Rorty are influential on university campuses, they form only a part of a larger shift in thinking reflected in Western culture. What unifies the otherwise diverse strands of postmodernism is the questioning of the central assumptions of the Enlightenment epistemology (p. 7).

Postmodernism brings with it a pessimism that erodes the optimism of the last century. Many no longer believe that life is improving and that we, as humans, and our social order are getting better. Grenz pays close attention to the needs of youth and says, "Members of the emerging generation are no longer confident that humanity will be able to solve the world's great problems or even that their economic situation will surpass that of their parents" (p. 7).

Postmodernism not only affects the attitude of youth but also the way we all view knowledge and what is knowable. The postmodern mind does not accept the Enlightenment view that knowledge is objective. Instead, it believes that the universe is historical, relational, and personal rather than mechanistic and dualistic. Communication carries the need to understand this larger context which influences youth and the way they think and access knowledge.

The interviews also revealed nine themes which were instructive in the design of the written curriculum found in Appendix A. The actual experience of being a youth worker calls into question traditional ways of educating youth workers. Curriculum for educating youth workers needs to be more than a conservative set of written plans. The written curriculum found in Appendix A proposes an approach to educating youth workers that best conforms to the actual experience of being a youth worker. The nine themes that emerged from the interviews were consistent with the nine themes that emerged from the surveys and workshops. The nine themes from the interviews are: (1) family life, (2) cultural connectedness, (3) counseling, (4) administration, (5) communications, (6) teaching, (7) leadership development, (8) spiritual formation, and (9) mentoring.

Each theme is described in detail in the next section. The themes give rise to a written curriculum for preparing youth workers. Each theme is described in detail in the next section.

But curriculum needs to be more than courses. The context in which youth workers do their work forms part of the curriculum as does their own experience. The need to deliver course on-site is also important to this particular curriculum.

Themes

Spiritual Formation

Both the youth surveyed and the youth workers in the workshops and interviews expressed needs that fall into the area of spiritual formation. However, it is evident in the data that neither the youth nor the youth workers have a clear sense or definition of what is involved in spiritual formation. The youth make a clear distinction between their desire to know God or to learn about God and their desire to gain biblical knowledge. They are looking to youth workers to help them in both learning or relating to God and gaining bibical knowledge. Junior highs make statements about youth workers that "They help us learn more about God," or " They help us understand God." Senior highs are more explicit and speak of prayer or the spiritual life as a journey. Referring to the youth worker they say that the youth worker "prays with us when we are having problems," "Guides young people in their walk with God" or assists "So youth can feel accepted and have a spiritual experience, not only adults."

The youth workers are clearly conscious that the youth look to them for spiritual direction. Although the youth express spiritual development or formation in terms of knowing God, prayer, or spiritual experience the youth workers speak of spiritual formation. In all the workshops the theme of spiritual formation arose. The youth workers spoke of "helping youth to grow spiritually", "personal spiritual formation" of youth, "spiritual development" of youth, and "personal spiritual formation of youth workers." The youth workers see the need to assist youth in spiritual formation and also see their own need in the same area. In concensus statements they articulated the spiritual need along with the need to grow in other areas. One concensus statement said that we need to "develop mentally, spiritually, physically, emotionally, and socially." In one interview spiritual formation emerged at a priority as a curriculum area for youth workers.

Although youth workers, when mirroring the needs of youth speak clearly of spiritual formation, there is not a strong definition of what constitutes spiritual formation. In the research the need for spiritual development and the notion of spiritual formation is present in the surveys, workshops, and interviews. I believe that a course on spiritual formation would best address the expressed need and would help youth workers construct knowledge so that they come to a better understanding and definition of what constitutes spiritual formation.

Family Life

Family life is a theme that emerged, especially from the workshops and interviews. The youth did not talk in explicit terms about family except to note, in some instances, that neither they nor their family were involved in the church. However, the youth reflected, in many instances, a sense of distance from the adult world and one could assume that for a number of the youth the sense of distance includes parents. However, the youth workers were conscious that as they touched the lives of youth they also touched the families the youth are a part of. They reflected that families can mean pain, distance, as well as, nuture for youth. One youth worker interviewed observed that "Teens really struggle with communication with family. We need to resource families."

In particular for youth workers there was the clear sense that families present them with the need for partnering, understanding, and dealing with issues of popular culture. The concensus statements in the workshops directly addressed these topics. One statement out of the Vancouver workshop said, "We need better communication with parents of youth because youth ministry is family ministry, youth ministry is a team ministry with parents." In the Regina workshop one concensus statement was "We need to work with parents to help them through parenting teens." Another concensus statement said "We need to educate parents in popular culture/adolescent development."

There is a need for youth workers to understand the dynamics of family life and the influence of family, in its various forms, upon children and adolescents. In the workshops youth workers spoke of the need for "knowledge of family systems" , "helping families", and the need to "work with parents helping them through parenting of teens."

Youth workers both desire and are in a strategic position to help bridge the gap that often occurs between parents and their teens. One youth worker I interviewed spoke about this need at some length. She saw that with more education and the acceptance of parents she could be of real help to parents in understanding their teens. She was particularly concerned that some of the teens were at risk through some of their activities but their parents either did not see this or understand the significance of the risks.

Cultural Connectedness

Cultural connectedness was a theme which emerged in various ways in the three forms of inquiry I conducted. The youth through the surveys saw the need to have youth workers help them "bridge the gap" between themselves and adults. There seemed to be an awareness that they were often misunderstood by older adults and that perhaps they also did not understand older adults. They expressed the importance of youth workers as being those persons who could "Help older adults see the youth's point of view". One insightful statement said that the youth worker "Can bring the youth's problems and praise to the church board. They will probably relate to our youth pastor better than if we took something to them". Another said "Give the youth a voice in the church. They then feel signiifcant". Such comments were not isolated but occurred often in the surveys.

The youth workers saw that much of the problem of distance from older adults is due to a lack of cultural connectedness and awareness. One only needs to mention music and styles of dress to become aware of the issues of cultural difference that often follow generational lines. Youth workers expressed a desire to understand more about culture, popular culture in particular, and how to enable people of different cultures to connect with one another. One youth worker put it this way, "We need to educate the entire church regarding culture-its diversity, the generational differences, and the place of youth culture". Another said "It is important for the youth worker to be culturally attuned".

Youth workers see cultural connectedness as connecting generations, especially youth to older adults.

Counseling

Counseling is a theme which arose quite explicitly from the youth and the youth workers. The youth see themselves as having frustrations, problems, a need to be listened to, and a need for guidance. Counseling for youth is talking, problem-solving, and being understood. They want youth workers who understand them, spend time with them, and who will listen to them. Regarding the importance of having a youth worker on staff some said, "To talk to kids about various issues." "To help youth through their problems, provide support." When asked what education or training a youth worker should have the most popular answer related to counseling.

The youth workers also are aware of the need to connect relationally with the youth. They see their frustrations, challenges, at risk behaviours, and need for guidance. They see the importance of one-on-one time with youth; much of which is spent in counseling in both formal and informal ways. Counseling for them is solving serious problems of youth, showing compassion, spending informal time with youth, and referring to professional counselors. One youth worker said "Counseling is part of what I enjoy doing the most but really tough issues whether suicide, pregnancy, or really serious family issues; I realize the lack of education in counseling issues". In response to the question about what the top three curriculum needs were, one youth worker said that "The top three curriculum needs would be counseling, administration, and spiritual direction for oneself." Another said, "Lastly counseling is important. To know compassion and when to refer."

Administration

Administration was a strong theme throughout the inquiry. For youth administration is planning and organizing. They see that youth workers plan events, programs, and major special events such as ski trips, retreats, and mission excursions. They also see that the youth workers do a lot of the actual organization of the events. When stating what important work youth workers do many said "Planning and organizing youth activities." Youth workers "Set up activities."

The youth workers are very aware of the time that planning, organizing, and scheduling takes in their work experience. They are sometimes painfully aware of this as some reflected in the interviews. Two youth workers, one a male and the other a female spoke about their need to have help in knowing how to do administration. One said I need to know "How to keep current with resources, programs, and relationships." Another said, "I need help in resource management of time, people, finances, and building networks." They expressed a real need to learn is this area and indeed saw their own survival in their jobs as being somewhat dependent on gaining knowledge and skill in administration. They also reflected that they discovered this same need among many of their colleagues. Two youth workers reflecting on administration confessed their need in the area and reluctance to seek help. The first said that "One thing that used to be a problem was administration." This same person saw it as an important curriculum item.

The other worker said "I used to think that I was a weak administrator and felt reluctant to ask for help." Implied here is that help was not readily given in the area of administration. When asked what a typical week is like for a youth worker all reveal that they are heavily involved in administration.

Communication

Communications emerged as a theme in various forms of expression. The youth were conscious that youth workers often were the prime communicators both about youth and youth events to the rest of the people in the church. Communication for the youth meant representing them to the older adults, understanding them, and involving them. They saw the youth worker's role in words of one youth, but repeated by others, as "Making sure no one is left out." Also the youth worker is "To help other adults see the youth's point of view."

The youth workers also saw themselves in a communications role. They saw the need to keep in touch with youth, parents, and the church as part of their role. For them communication was both a connecting and an informing role. In the workshops, especially they spoke of time spent "phoning, fundraising, publicizing youth programs, doing newsletters, and emailing with youth." Their workshop concensus statements reflected their sense of the importance of communication skills and knowledge in their work. In Edmonton the group said, "Communication skills need to be developed; also communication knowledge." The Calgary group spoke of the need "To build clear communication of youth needs to the church." In an interview one youth worker said that an important area for youth workers is "Communication and this would be the how to's of communicating with youth, youth leaders, and parents."

Teaching

Teaching was a theme which emerged throughout the inquiry. Many youth want to be taught by the youth workers. They mention bible studies and discussions on topics pertinent to youth. Typical of comments expressed often by youth were: "They (youth workers) should be experts in teaching the word of God". The need "To get people interested in learning about God". "They focus on teens and understand how to teach Christinity to them in a way they will get it."

When the youth workers reflected in the workshops and interviews on what they do and how they spend a week, teaching was an obvious activity which occupied much of their time in both preparation and delivery. It becomes evident that the churches themselves often expect youth workers to be engaged in teaching through small groups, home studies, or Sunday Schools. For youth workers teaching is related to teaching parents, youth, and the church. In one workshop of sixteen priorities listed by the whole group five were about either educating the church or youth, on various issues. In reflecting on a typical week all youth workers interviewed were involved in teaching either small groups, leadership to youth, Sunday School classes, bible studies, drama, or music. Some were involved in three formal teaching situations per week.

Leadership Development

Leadership development was a theme which emerged both from the youth and the youth workers. For youth leadership is guiding, listening, and modelling. It is the youth workers who will lead the way in knowing what and how to plan events for youth. The youth would say of the youth worker that they "organize and lead youth functions." or the "Youth worker guides us, is a good friend, and listens well." One said that it is important that the youth worker "be a positive role-model for the youth." When asked about the type of education a youth worker should have some reflected, as one youth said, that a youth worker should have "some sort of leadership training course."

The youth workers reflect this same awareness but are more sensitive to the need to lead youth in two areas. First, they want to lead them in spiritual and character development and second, they want to teach them leadership so that they can become leaders of their peers. Leadership for them is mentoring, developing, and equipping. Youth workers in the Vancouver workshop saw leadership training as important. In Calgary they saw that youth workers should "Train youth to become peers leaders-build leaders." This was reflected in very similar terms in the Regina workshop.

Mentoring

Mentoring was the final theme to emerge. The youth are looking to youth workers to mentor them. However, this is more implicitly implied in the data of the surveys than explicitly implied. The youth look for guidance, someone to spend personal time with them. One youth said that it is important that youth workers mentor youth.

The concept was implied but in only this case did it become explicit.

Among the youth workers in the workshops and the interviews mentoring is a very explicit theme. For the youth workers it is a theme that has two foci. The youth are a focus of their own need to be mentors. They see a real need to come alongside of youth and to be with them and guide them as mentors. The second focus of mentoring for youth workers is themselves being mentored by another, older, or more mature person. As I listened to the youth workers in the workshops this was a need which few, if any, denied as being their own need and desire. In consensus statements it emerged as a strong theme and it was very explicitly mentioned in the interviews. In the Edmonton workshop the group said that "Mentoring needs to be a part of training, accountability, spiritual development, support, and encouragement." In Vancouver the group said, "A personal commitment to be mentored is needed in the youth worker." In Calgary the group said that we need "To provide every youth with a mentor." All the youth workers interviewed agreed that having a mentor was very important. One said, "The older I get the more important mentoring becomes. I have had three over time of my youth ministry career. Mentoring is important because its a way of passing things on."

Summary

I entered my research with assumptions, as detailed earlier, that I would obtain data which would inform the development of a curriculum for youth workers, a curriculum which would reflect their own experience of what it means to be a youth worker. I believe that a very strong and rich source of data was collected and which once analyzed and reduced has produced nine themes which reflect quite accurately the experience of what it is to be a youth worker.

I have had opportunity on many occasions to discuss and formally present my research findings to youth workers and they confirm that the areas addressed by these themes reflect their world of youth work. Also, in several of these areas, pilot courses have been developed by two seminaries and the response of youth workers to the courses has been sufficient that both seminaries have continued them in their catalogues of course offerings.

Out of these themes have emerged principles for developing and organizing curriculum. These principles are discussed in the next chapter and form the basis of the curriculum developed and presented in Appendix A.

Chapter 5

Principles for Developing and Organizing Curriculum

Introduction

From the nine themes generated by the research came five curriculum development principles. I identified the five guiding principles by applying two hermeneutic questions to the themes: (1) What curriculum for preparing youth workers best affirms, and conforms to, the actual experience of being a youth worker? and (2) How does the actual experience of being a youth worker inform or call into question, the guiding ideas we rely on to currently prepare youth workers?

The five principles are:

(1) Shared praxis

(2) Relational/interactive mentoring

(3) Cultural appropriateness/awareness

(4) Skill-building

(5) Variety in delivery systems (i.e. distance education).

The guiding principles are heuristically useful in both the design and evaluation of youth worker curricula. Regarding design, adhering to the principles ensures that curriculum is first written and then implemented for historical beings; with people in a real time and place. Adhering to the principles helps ensure that curriculum developers are not means-end driven; instead, are able to commit to the necessity of using written syllabi and courses described in written form without the reader and user of the written syllabi and courses assuming that a Tylerian type, traditional program is being proposed.

When the guiding principles are applied to evaluation of curriculum there is an increased likelihood that enough of the right kind of information will be gathered and appropriate value will be placed on that information. For example, if a program is praxis-oriented, a multiple-choice test is an inappropriate means of measuring the program's effectiveness. A goal-setting workshop might be a more appropriate form of measuring its effectiveness.

Three Principles Explained

(1) Shared-praxis

Groome (1980) has developed the concept of shared-praxis which is discussed earlier on pages 22 to 24. Through his five movements a group engages in action-reflection-action. The initial action is always the present, fully and richly defined. The subsequent action is the future or as Groome defines it the "vision" (1980, p220). I first tested Groome's notion of shared-praxis in a weekend workshop with a group of people in Saskatchewan who were interested in exploring new forms of doing Christian education in the church. The five movements worked quite well in that setting and with refinement and the help of Drs. Jacknicke and Beauchamp I designed a workshop format which I used with youth workers. The methodology of the workshop design permitted me to follow Groome's movement for shared-praxis with the youth workers. I gained a very full and rich description of their present action and through group reflection I also gained a full and rich description of their vision/future action.

If one is interested in developing and organizing curriculum that best affirms and conforms to the actual experience of being a youth worker then a shared-praxis approach in my experience works well in getting a description of their experience. It generates themes. It is a principle which is foundational to all of the nine themes generated in my inquiry.

(2) Relational/interactive mentoring

One of the taken-for-granted aspects of personal development is maturation. Maturation occurs best when one is related to or connected to another more mature person. Youth workers in my inquiry mirrored this knowledge in their expression both to be mentors and to be mentored. They are looking for someone to come alongside them as a guide, a person who shares their experience, and one to whom they can be accountable.

Many of the youth workers I interacted with did not reflect the presence of an intentional mentoring person in their present experience. Their reflection was that they desired this in their more ideal future experience. It ought to have been part of their present experience but they are calling into question the way youth worker education is presently delivered. Mentoring is often, for them, not a part of the delivery system. They have to look for it outside any system of formal education they have encountered.

They are also reflecting that they are in mentoring situations with youth. However, in many cases neither their own formal education nor their personal experience have given them knowledge of how best to mentor another person. They are experiencing a "lack" in two areas of their experience as a youth worker. Their lack is best addressed through their formal education and lived experience by being mentored and educated in how to mentor. Mentoring conforms closely to their experience of being youth workers and their vision of their own future of being empowered to be better youth workers.

(3) Cultural appropriateness/awareness

There appears to be an unexamined notion, especially among Christian people, that culture relates to ethnicity and language. This might be attributed to the long established tradition of sending missionaries to peoples of other nations where ethnicity and language were clearly barriers to bridging cultures. When culture is defined in terms of those things which bring meaning, identity, and relatedness into our lives then we are more able to see culture as not solely related to issues of language or ethnicity. There can be considerable cultural diversity among peoples of the same ethnic origin and language.

It came clear from the research that youth workers are, in fact, working cross-culturally. As a result, they experience much the same types of diversity and conflict that an international worker experiences.

It also came clear to me from the research that youth workers might underestimate the significance of the cultural "difference" of youth. The differences presented by youth are too often viewed as simply conflictual problems or simply generational gaps. The differences therefore are treated as only problems of age and not the cultural problems that they are. Youth workers need to learn to deal with differences between youth and parents, youth and teachers, youth and pastors as cultural and therefore as deep differences in meaning, identity, and ways of relating. The preparation of youth workers must include a recognition of the "differences" and the barriers in relating that arise from the differences. The preparation of youth workers must equip them to recognize the cultural problems youth face in "belonging" and "communicating". Finally, the preparation of youth workers must include a component of bridge-building between cultures.

A Transformational Approach to Curriculum Design

To be consistent with the aim of working with youth workers to help them improve their world through the possibility of transforming it means emphasizing transformation in curriculum. Emphasizing a purely objective approach to curriculum design on the otherhand would encourage the researcher to postulate some curriculum writer's or teacher's "ideal" way of doing youth work. It would not reveal youth's ideal way. The writer's or teacher's ideal might help make curriculum more cost effective, time effective, efficient, or user-friendly. However, it would not be transformational because it would have nevertheless treated the youth worker's world as ahistorical. Because it ignores the youth worker's ideal, it is not built out of their present situation, as Groome (1980) would describe it.

A non-transformational, objective approach in curriculum suggests that an instructor can know the ideal as a body of knowledge and pedagogically needs only to discover the best methodology of imparting the knowledge to the students. They receive the knowledge as information to be applied in an ever-increasing skillful manner. This attitude assumes that students have little to bring to the situation apart from intelligence, which henceforth determine their ability to take in the information given to them, feed it back, and demonstrate skill in its use.

A transformational approach on the otherhand assumes that the instructor does not enter the learning environment with all the knowledge. The instructor's knowledge is not the ideal; it is merely his or her own understanding and that of the historical community pertaining to the subject at hand. The ideal is discovered mutually. This means the student's experience is crucial. The present action of the student determines the ideal but is always just a further step beyond the present. The ideal, in this sense, is always future. However, the ideal, when treated as a set body of knowledge, is never future but is the accumulated knowledge of the past applied in the present.

I am not suggesting that there is no ideal apart from one's personal ideal. There is also the ideal discovered by the journey of the community we are a part of. This is aptly described in Groome's description of the five pedagogical movements (1980, p.206). Even here the personal ideal is valued. Groome suggests that you always begin by getting the individual to name her or his present action.

Eisner (1993) speaks of a career-long journey, guided by a variety of beliefs. One belief he underscores and articulates is the matter of *representation*. In presenting this concept Eisner speaks of developing the mind, a popular theme with him. He says that the ability to "hear the music, to see the landscape, and to feel the qualities in a bolt of cloth, are not automatic consequences of maturation" (1993, p. 6). They are developments of the mind which live in the domain of impression and not expression.

To move from impression to expression involves representation, but not the mental representation discussed in cognitive science. Eisner defines representation as "the process of transforming the contents of consciousness into a public form so that they can be stabilized, inspected, edited, and shared with others" (1993, p.6). The forms of representation differ and, therefore, the experiences they make possible differ. "Different kinds of experience lead to different meanings, which, in turn, make different forms of understanding possible" (1993,p.6).

Eisner's argument about representation has relevance for my research and the curriculum I have worked to design. First, Eisner gives a fairly precise definition to a form of transformation. Transformation means taking that which has formed impression within our consciousness and making it explicit in a public form. I see that what I wish to do in my research with youth workers is just this very thing. I wish, through the various methods of research I use, to help youth workers probe into their consciousness. What has impressed them out of their experience and reflection? How can those impressions be brought forth and made public in a curriculum?

Such an approach for curriculum design and teaching allows the curriculum itself to define the opportunities given to students to think about the subject matter presented. Therefore curriculum design needs to, as much as possible, present the scope of thought that youth workers will have to deal with in a public form. Therefore, through research, the curriculum needs to have a basis in their own impressions which, in turn, come out of experience and reflection. If the curriculum is legislated by the needs of the church or some other outside body, it will severely limit the possibility of representation.

Curriculum Design as a Defining Exercise

Curriculum is a defining exercise and form. It defines, for example, what forms of representation matter. This very act influences the kinds of meaning students can obtain and represent. Therefore, if one is concerned about such matters, and I am, it is important to pay close attention to how curriculum is formed and who and what influence its scope.

Meaning and form are related, Eisner argues. Meaning is also related to experience. Experience first forms an impression, either in our consciousness or deeper within us. For the experience to gain meaning, it must be expressed in some form. If the form is to be made public, it must have some representation. These forms give shape to the meanings we wish to express. Curriculum needs to pay close attention to the meanings students need to represent. This issue is expressed concisely by Eisner when he says,

> By selectively emphasizing some forms of representation over others, schools shape children's thinking skills and in the process privilege some students and handicap others by virtue of the congruence between their aptitudes and the opportunities to use them in school. In this sense, the school is profoundly political (1993, p.7)

Eisner addresses the important issue in curriculum design: Who controls the design of the curriculum? Often this question is argued, is expressed in terms of "the basics" or the more common politicized slogan "Back to Basics Movements." Someone determines, maybe the government or in my case the church, that certain matters must be taught and must form the core of the curriculum. These subjects are then constituted into course offerings and credit hours. As I developed my research and discussed it with colleges where such research might prove useful, I have already encountered such arguments.

Apple (1993) also addresses the issue of what and whose ends curriculum serves. He says, "Curriculum is never simply a neutral assemblage of knowledge, somehow appearing in the texts and classrooms of a nation. It is always a part of a *selective tradition*, someone's selection, some group's vision of legitimate knowledge" (1993, p. 222). Making Apple's words proactive, the aim of my research and curriculum design has been to ensure that youth workers are a part of the design group. If they become curriculum designers, they can help counteract a curriculum designed merely by the group that has power to determine what is official knowledge in any given area. In the case of youth ministries, this group is often a faculty group, or some other group with political power. Apple describes the situation well when he says,

> Thus whether we like it or not, differential power intrudes into the very heart of curriculum, teaching, and evaluation. What *counts* as knowledge, the ways in which it is organized, who is empowered to teach it, what counts as an appropriate display of having learned it, and -- just as critically -- who is allowed to ask and answer all of these questions are part and parcel of how dominance and subordination are reproduced and altered in society. There is, then, always a *politics* of official knowledge (p. 222).

On the one hand, youth ministry has been part of an inevitable situation as Apple aptly describes it. There has always been a politics of official knowledge. This situation is probably unavoidable. What can be avoided, however, are traditional modes of curriculum design, delivery, and evaluation. In my particular case, for reasons which I have referred to and will refer to, I wish to give youth workers -- the students of my curriculum a voice. I began this research because I believed that their own representation must be present at all levels of the curriculum and that they must be a part of the circle which determines official knowledge.

Curriculum must also have a scope broader than the basics if it is to have relevancy to the students. This broad scope gives representation to experience, which is private, until it has some public form which can be shared with others. These new representations of experience are important, because not all experience can be expressed in predetermined forms.

As I was designing my research I had the opportunity to attend a seminar presented by Eisner (1993) entitled, "Designing Schools that Educate." He addressed the problem that education often has little to do with meaning and satisfaction. The aim, he suggested, should be to help the student discover the joy of the journey. The primary aim is to help students to do well outside the school or college. My research is an attempt to join youth workers in their journey. I want to design a curriculum that will be useful to them and will give them satisfaction outside the classroom where they work with youth.

Eisner presented several insights which have helped me both design my research and envision the development of curriculum. These insights have relevancy to youth work and the world of youth workers:

(1) We need to help students to develop a critical-mindedness.

(2) We need to make it possible for students to become part of a caring community.

(3) We need to help students maintain the appetite to wonder.

The appetite to wonder is the ability to think of things which might be but are not now. Focusing on the predictable limits of thought. Purposes are formed when someone imagines what could be conceived but which are not now present.

Also included in the syllabi is a course on Theological reflection. This course is included because of the importance of reflection to Groome's five pedagogical movements and because youth workers in the church need to gain knowledge in theology. I am indebted to Dr. Stanley Grenz for assistance in developing the syllabus for the course on theological reflection. As well, Dr. Mark Davis gave advice in developing the syllabus for the course on counseling and Dr. Terry Fossen the course on spiritual formation.

Summary

The nine core courses suggested in the curriculum are supported by more than one set of data and research methodology. The youth survey suggested fewer courses than either the workshops or the interviews. Youth were very much focused on their own needs. However the survey showedg165

the need for courses in five areas:

1. Leadership

2. Psychology
3. Spiritual formation
4. Teaching/Education
5. Communications

All five of these areas were indicated in the workshop and interview data. The only discrepancy between the workshops and the interviews was in one area. The workshops indicated a need for a course in spiritual formation while this was not a strong indication in the interviews. However, it was indicated in the youth survey. The end result was that all nine courses, included in the curriculum I designed, were indicated by two separate sets of data. Those nine courses were:

1. Spiritual formation
2. Leadership development
3. Communications
4. Teaching
5. Counseling/Adolescent Development
6. Family Ministry
7. Popular Culture
8. Administration
9. Mentoring

The first five courses listed are indicated by all three sets of data. These courses form a "core" within the core curriculum. This curriculum could stand alone as a Certificate program. It could also be used as a core of required courses within a larger program, such as a degree program. I believe that there is strong indication that youth workers ought to be educated in these nine areas.

Since these courses will be within a seminary context I have added a tenth course, “Living Theologically”. Students will have to reflect and have some knowledge of their own faith and belief system beyond a course on Spiritual Formation.

Chapter 6

Reflections on a Curriculum Project

Personal reflections

When I reflect on the research I have done, which is often, I am struck most by the surprises I encountered along the way. Most of the surprises were pleasant. Some of the surprises were not totally anticipated. For example, sometimes I saw options and was surprised when one option emerged as the preferred choice. Some surprises were totally unanticipated. It was this latter type of surprise that I encountered most often in my research.

I am still surprised by the interest of youth workers. In Chapter One, I discussed the personal aspect of research. I looked at the "hiddeness" of research and how participants read the "text" in different ways than the researcher. However, my surprise still remains. I was unprepared for the mutual sense of affirmation and support that occurred between myself and the youth workers.

Further reflection has indicated one reason for my surprise at the affirmation and encouragement of youth workers. I am a task-oriented person, and my focus in the early stages of the research was almost totally on the mechanical aspects. The people were sources of information. I was not focused on the relational, even though I knew that youth workers were highly relational people. By engaging them in interactive research methods, I entered their world -- by invitation. I do not regret that I entered their world; besides the new knowledge I gained, I also gained through my own personal experiences.

Friendships were formed out of many contacts. My appreciation of youth workers was enhanced.

One practical aspect of the research, especially the workshops, has been the creation of a youth workers' network. The research was not solely responsible for the network; however, it did contribute. The research demonstrated to youth workers the value of being together. Some became aware of how they could support one another and share resource ideas. There is now, among many of these youth workers, an internet network supported by a website.

The network has also been enhanced by two "summits." The first summit in 1997, was for youth workers and was conducted in Calgary over two days. The participants saw value in the summit and strongly recommended that these summits be continued. The second summit, held in early 1998, involved youth workers who worked in camps. Both these summits have enhanced youth work by the sharing of ideas and the launching of mutual projects.

Perhaps the biggest surprise has come from what I would term "conversations" about the research. Because I like to talk about my research, I have engaged in many conversations. I will refer to one which is ongoing. I began to talk with colleagues in academic institutions that had programs which involved the education of youth workers. I shared some of what I was observing as I worked with the research data. Their interest was strong and they suggested that we should get together. We did get together in 1995 and have been meeting several times a year since then.

The group even gave itself a name -- the Ynet, which stands for Youth Workers

Educational Network. It is a network of four academic institutions and two denominations. Since 1995 three of the four academic institutions have made major program changes to meet the needs of youth workers. Both denominations have continued to work cooperatively and to direct new resources towards working with youth and youth workers. When I began my research, I did not anticipate that any of these things would happen.

Perhaps the one disappointing surprise related to youth worker job descriptions. I had assumed, prior to my research, that I could do a document analysis of youth workers' job descriptions. I asked a number of youth workers to supply me with their job descriptions. Although all who were asked said they would, few did so. At first, I assumed that they were forgetful. In follow-up conversations I discovered that, in fact, most had not forgotten. Instead they had discovered that there was no formal job description on file.

Many youth workers, probably because these are their first professional jobs, do not ask for job descriptions. They might assume that the church has created a job description; however, this is a wrong assumption. There are few job descriptions for youth workers. This discovery was a disappointment. I believe that both youth workers and churches need help to develop job descriptions.

Major Findings

One major finding in the research relates to popular culture. As I discussed the research data from the workshops in chapter four, I spoke of the hiddeness of popular culture for youth workers. Popular culture has been a hidden area for youth workers because they have given it other names. Many of these names relate to conflictual situations. They often find themselves in conflict with older adults as they support youth. These conflicts are often seen to be about formality versus informality or about traditional versus contemporary; however, the conflicts are often actually centered on the fact that youth and their parents live in different worlds.

Youth have adopted popular culture as their dominate culture. Through this culture they express meaning, identity, and intimacy. Popular culture is not, however, the dominate culture of most older adults. Most conflicts arise because youth and adults assume that they live in the same culture when, in fact, they do not. Neither the youth nor older adults see themselves in cross-cultural relationships. It is this lack of recognition that youth workers can bridge. Youth workers can play a key role in bridging the gap, because of their status as cross-cultural workers.

I mentioned earlier that, whenever I explicitly stated my belief that youth and adults are, essentially, living in different cultures youth workers always agreed. I never met a youth worker who disagreed; however, I have met many who have never reflected upon the situation. As I spoke to informal settings of youth and older adults, I often reflected about how many of their conflicts were cultural. A favourite topic, for them, was music in churches. The discussion almost always used terms such as old and new or traditional and contemporary. When we moved the discussion to culture and cultural terms like ways of expressing identity, meaning, and intimacy we gained common ground.

Most people, whether older adults or youth, could begin to see that they had much in common, but their cultural forms of expression were quite different. They could begin to read the "text" of the others' culture and discover that one was not more spiritual than the other. One complicating factor is that expressions in popular culture tend to follow generational lines. The problem seems to be between the young and the old; however, when seen in cultural terms, the possibility is present of building bridges and forming lines of communicating and relating to one another in meaningful ways.

Another major research finding was the explicit need youth workers have for mentoring. Many are actively seeking ways to have a mentor. This need might relate to popular culture. The separation of the generations has often meant a lack of meaningful relationships being formed where experienced persons can support the inexperienced. Whatever the factors, and I shall speak of mentoring again in the section on further research topics, this need is expressed by youth workers -- they want mentors.

Youth workers express their need in two areas. They realize that they lack experience in areas where they are asked to work. One area cited in the research was administration. To have an experienced administrator work alongside them would be helpful. The need for a mentor is also prompted by a need for support. Youth workers often feel like they are living on the edge, just a step ahead of the youth they lead. They are continually asked to do things which are new to them. They are caught between the expectations of parents and their youth. They want someone to walk the journey with them and give them support.

Therefore, mentors for youth workers need to be people who have experience to share but who also know how to support through a caring relationship. I am often struck by how little mentoring goes on in our world. Businesses, educational institutions, churches, and government agencies all provide continuing education opportunities for employees. Many employees, however, are never mentored. There seems to be an unwritten rule; "You survive on the basis of your own resources." Youth workers are asking for more. They want to survive but with the help and resources of others not just their own.

Another major finding, which will need further research, was the connection between early life experiences in leadership and the later life desire to be a leader. This finding was indicated in the survey done with the youth at the Baptist Leadership training School in Calgary. What has been significant for me is how valuable a motivator this experience is in later life. Most of the youth who had these leadership experiences had a very strong desire to develop and channel them into leadership with others.

The camping program came out considerably stronger than the church and the school as a site which gives youth leadership opportunities. Churches themselves appear not to be good sites for youth to gain leadership experience. If this is true churches need to pay close attention to this matter and to make spaces in their education programs to consider more opportunities for youth to experience leadership. Churches ought also to see the importance of camping; a fact which remains hidden to many churches.

The final major finding, apart from the course indications for the curriculum, has been the importance of distance education for youth workers. Prior to the research, I believed distance education was important. However, I did not know if youth workers saw it as important. I now know that they have both a need and a desire to access learning on-site.

Any potential youth leaders are already engaged in youth work. A seminary I am associated with recently had to reschedule a course to fit youth workers' schedule. The course was required in a youth worker specialty. However, it was scheduled for Friday night and Saturday over several weekends. Most of the students in the class were employed as youth workers, and Friday nights and Saturdays were their busiest times. Youth workers need special delivery systems if they are to access educational opportunities.

Youth workers are also a part of a generation that is fluent with computer technology and the internet. In the youth summits I have referred to youth workers can always assume that most of their peers are on the internet and so they immediately think of networking with email. When it comes to delivering educational resources they immediately think in the same terms. Youth workers are a group of people who can be helped with the use of distant education courses.

Youth workers give a strong qualifier to distant education programs. In the interviews I conducted, all the youth workers saw a need for a balance between on-campus education and on-site education. They want their education to be a combination of both delivery systems. They are a highly relational group and want to be together at times. This chemistry was seen in the research workshops and the subsequent youth workers' summits. The most successful youth worker educational program will, I believe, be the one that combines at least these two methods of delivering education.

Changes I Would Make if I Were To Do the Research Again

In broad strokes I would make very few changes. The three methods of research I used -- the survey of junior and senior youth, youth workers' workshops, and interviews with youth workers -- worked as planned. These three methods provided triangulation and ample data to design a curriculum.

However, I would like to have more rural and small town youth workers involved in the research. By necessity, workshops were conducted in urban areas. The resulting data may be biased towards urban youth work. I believe it would be difficult to use a workshop format and include rural youth workers. The expense would be too great. However, I have since thought of ways to include them in the research. I discuss this later in the section of further research.

I would like to involve youth from high schools in a survey. The survey with youth was done through three large camps. It included young people with little church connection. However, a slightly revised questionnaire could be used in schools where some youth would have church connections but many would not. Do these youth want youth workers? If so, what do they want them to do? How do they compare with the youth surveyed in the camps?

Indications for Further Research

In expanding the need to do research with youth workers in rural areas and small towns, I believe that a distance education model would be ideal for them. I would like to ask if they have educational needs which are different then their counter parts in urban areas? I did not have the resources to access them in my research. However, a project that just focuses on them more centrally would be feasible. A survey followed by telephone interviews and a select number of face-to-face interviews ought to collect sufficiently rich data. I believe that research which included rural youth workers, and a project focusing on only rural and small town; would produce helpful knowledge.

The leadership issue discovered in the survey done with the Baptist Leadership Training School students would be a good follow-up research study. The findings of my research study strongly hint that early experiences in leadership yield strong desires later in life for leadership development. If this is so, a larger-scale study might produce significant finding for camps, churches, and schools.

Further research with camps, schools, and churches on this subject might reveal more generalizable findings. Hopefully, such a research study might suggest how significant this finding is for other populations and provide more data to help support curriculum development in the area of leadership.

I was struck by an anecdotal comment made by a female youth worker I interviewed as she discussed the importance of mentoring. In reflection, she realized that she had two mentors. One was female and the other was male. She suggested that the gender mix would be good for all youth workers. Her argument was that youth workers, like other professionals, see thorough a gender-biased lens.

I believe her comment and her experience is significant. I would like to explore this area with further research. I could see a project lasting several years and might include a select number of youth workers who had both a male and a female mentor. An inventory could be designed to assess a youth worker's views, skills, and knowledge in predetermined areas prior to being mentored. Following the mentoring the assessment could be administered again to determine any change. Youth workers might be interviewed after the mentoring to gain insight about any hidden factors and to discover the meaning of the process for them.

Another area for further research would be in distance education. If a program could be designed that embodies the balance of on-campus and on-site delivery of education, a project could be designed to research and evaluate the program. The program should be compared to programs which are solely on-campus and with programs which are solely distant education.

The recommendations in this project are based upon research with youth workers. Their need and desire is clearly indicated by the data to be in the area of a balanced delivery of on-campus and on-site education. However, the data based upon the experience of such a program is not present. Experience might well produce other knowledge.

Where to From Here?

Even as I write about further research, I see that some I will do myself. I am already engaged with others in the designing and delivering a new distance education model of education for youth workers. This model balances on-campus and on-site education.

Through my research I have developed a new meaning for my life. I believe that my future has to embody a significant amount of investment in the generations that are coming behind me. I too am convicted about the importance of mentoring. I have those who have mentored me and some who do so at present. I too need to be a mentor.

My research and conversations have brought me an opportunity to be strategically involved in an exciting project in my own city. This project involves and benefits youth and youth workers. The project is the development of a major Resource Centre. The initial project of the Resource Centre is to work with youth workers and youth in leadership development. Another major feature of the Resource Centre will be the production of quality distant education resources.

Early in my writings I spoke of the importance of journey. Through the research I have been on a journey which does not end here. It might very well occupy the rest of my life.

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Appendix A

Course Syllabi

Course Syllabus

Supervised Ministry

Course Description

The goal of the course is readiness for ministry with youth. The course is a nine-month orientation to youth ministry. At the core of the course is an individually-designed ministry experience involving selected readings, critical reflection on ministry through journalling and other reports, mentoring, and direct ministry involvement.

Webster (1991) notes that Christian maturity is not automatic. "Christians need to be guided, nurtured and shown ways of living that are both more spiritual and more human" (1991, p.16). Hence this course will emphasize mentoring and the mentoring relationship. Careful thought will be given to the selection of a mentor, a process shared by both the instructor and the student. The course places demands upon a mentor's time and ability. The student will form a close working relationship with this person. The mentor is one who, out of his or her own life and experience, can guide and support the student -- a companion on the journey.

The course will require that students journal. The purpose of the journal is to aid the expression of one's own knowing. Initially, probably for the first month, the challenge will be to make explicit your own experience, identity, feelings, and thoughts about what it means to be involved in youth ministry. Once you are able to express a fair body of data in these areas, the challenge becomes one of reflecting critically upon your present experience. At this point, you share the dialogue with your mentor. Your mentor will have the opportunity to journal with you and to begin the process of challenging you to interact with the Christian story. You are a youth worker. What does that mean and what is its experience? You are also a youth worker in the Christian community; what does that mean for you?

This particular course is designed to relate very closely to your context of work and ministry. Therefore, actual involvement in some form of youth work is a course requirement. The course will demand interaction in your writing and assignments with the work and people you are closely related to as a youth worker. The learning and building of knowledge in the course is closely related to your experience of doing youth work.

Intents of the Course

1. This course will help you gain new knowledge about yourself and how you can apply that knowledge in work with youth.
2. It is the intent of the course that you will gain, through the mentoring relationship, an appreciation of the importance of such a relationship in leadership development.
3. It is the intent of the course that you will be able to make explicit your vision for yourself as a youth worker.

4. It is the intent of the course that you gain greater facility in relating your knowledge of youth and youth work with your doing work with youth.
5. It is the intent of the course that you will gain new knowledge about what it means to do youth work in the Christian community.
6. It is the intent of the course that, through your own reflection and experience, you will be able to transfer your knowledge and experience into the mentoring of others.

Course Requirements

1. The student, with the instructor, will select a mentor. The mentor cannot be someone currently your supervisor or on the same staff team. This person should be someone who has supervisory experience and who is willing to give the time necessary to the process. The mentor will be given assistance and careful instruction. You will be required to meet with your mentor twice a month over he nine-month period for a minimum of one hour each time. You will be required to enter a process with your mentor whereby you critically reflect on your own vocational calling, your personal and professional identity, your work habits, and to do some theological reflection.
2. You will be required to engage in some form of practical work with youth which would involve ten hours per week of your time.
3. Every two months, for the first eight months, you will be required to submit a three page report to the instructor. These reports will center on a particular

aspect of your work with youth. You will reflect upon the issue and how you prepared or could have prepared for it. What knowledge have you gained? What has it revealed about you? What has it revealed about youth? Topics which you might what to address are:

-Issues relating to administration
-Issues relating to programming
-Matters pertaining to interpersonal skill development
-Counseling with youth
-Issues relating to families
-Communication issues

4. You are required to submit a monthly journal. Since this journal will be read and comments added by the Instructor, you should not include confidential material about yourself or others. The importance of the journal is to help you consider your vocation as a Youth Worker, your own sense of identity, areas of professional skill development, and areas where you are gaining knowledge or sense a need for new knowledge.

5. Twice during the nine-month period you will meet with the instructor and other colleagues in youth work. This colloquium experience is designed to provide direct face-to-face interaction with peers and the instructor on topics pertinent to youth ministry. The instructor may include some others who could provide specialized knowledge in the area of youth work. These colloquium experiences

will occur over a weekend period of a Friday night and all day Saturday. The exact dates and locations will be given when the supervised ministry information is produced each year. There will be several locations to accommodate distance education students.

Reading assignments will be given prior to each of the colloquium meetings and a six-page paper on a topic assigned at the meeting will be due one month after the meeting.

6. The mentor will be required to submit two reports during the course of the supervised ministry track. The first report will be due half way through the process; the second will be due at the end of the process.

Course Evaluation

In this course you will be issued either a grade of pass or fail.

Course Syllabus

Popular Culture and Ministry

Course Description

Culture always impacts our ability to minister. To interpret scripture and properly apply its teaching to our lives we need to understand the cultural context in which it was written. Missionary work must also understand culture to work cross-culturally. Studying culture is not new to the church and its leaders. It has had a significant place in Christian theology and missiology for a long time. We have not, however, tended to apply a missiological approach to ministry in our Canadian context except when we are clearly working across barriers of language and ethnicity. The rise of Popular Culture necessitates a change in the way we do ministry in our Canadian churches.

This course is designed to examine Popular Culture. The course will look at how Popular Culture is created, how it impacts the church's method of educating youth and young adults, its effect on worship styles in the contemporary church, and the relationship between the media and Popular Culture. Schultze et al. (1991) point out that "youth, popular culture, and the electronic media, largely under adult supervision, have interacted in such a way that young people have been reduced to passive consumers of culture" (1991 p.11). The issue of passive consumerism of culture will be examined closely in the course.

More and more, relationships between adults and youth feel like cross-cultural experiences. Part of the reason for this *feeling* is that they are cross-cultural experiences.

The church, to bridge the gap between youth and adults effectively, needs a clear understanding of Popular Culture -- the dominate culture for youth. Popular culture also is created against the backdrop of postmodernism. Mcrobbie claims that "...recent debates on postmodernism possess both a positive attraction and a usefulness to the analyst of popular culture. This is because they offer a wider, and more dynamic, understanding of contemporary representation than other accounts to date" (Mcrobbie 1994 p. 13). Grenz claims, "The postmodern ethos is especially influential within the emerging generation -- among younger adults who take for granted the information age, endless channels of cable programming, and MTV" (Grenz 1996, p.162).

The course will use a class process which include discussions, student presentations, video, case studies, and field trips. It is the *intent* of the class that, by studying Popular Culture in the light of Christian mission, we will gain a new understanding of this particular culture and a deeper appreciation of how the biblical message applies. We will look at new methods of educating and communicating with youth and young adults.

Intents of the Course

In this course, the students will:

1. Become more knowledgeable about Popular Culture and how it is formed.
2. Better understand the impact Popular Culture has on the ministry of the church.
3. Better understand the relationship between the media and Popular Culture.
4. Gain an appreciation of how the biblical message is not captured or held captive by any particular culture.

5. Be able to look critically at Popular Culture and its values.
6. Be able to form new strategies for communicating with and educating those whose dominate culture is Popular Culture.
7. Create new knowledge concerning Popular Culture and ministry.

Required Texts

Schultze, Quentin J. et al. (1991). Dancing in the dark: Youth, popular culture and the electronic media. Grand Rapids, Mich: Eerdmans.

Grenz, Stanley J.(1996). A primer on postmoderism. Grand Rapids, Mich: Eerdmans.

Mcrobbie, Angela. (1994). Postmoderism and popular culture. New York: Routledge.

Course Requirements

1. Students will read the required text Dancing in the dark: Youth, popular culture and the electronic media by Quentin J. Schultze et al., Eerdmans, 1991.
2. Additional readings and materials will be distributed in class. A brief report on the text and these materials will be due at the last class.
3. Students will complete a practical project of their own choice, in consultation with the instructor.
4. Each student will have the opportunity to design and present material to the class. These presentations will be assigned at the first class. These brief presentations, of 20 to 30 minutes, will enhance our discussion and learning.

5. Class attendance and appropriate participation are required.

Course Content

The course will deal with the following topics:

- What is culture and how is it created?
- What is distinctive about Popular Culture?
- How is Popular Culture created?
- What is the relationship between the media and Popular Culture?
- At what points does Popular Culture impact the ministry of the local church?
- What principles of missiology can be applied to Popular Culture?
- What new strategies for communicating with and educating youth exist?
- How should music, and popular culture effect worship?
- How should we design ministry based upon a knowledge of Popular Culture?

Course Evaluation:

1.	Class attendance and participation	15%
2.	Book and reading reports	20%
3.	Class presentation	20%
4.	Project	45%

Course Syllabus:

Counseling /Adolescent Development

Course Description

A survey done with about five hundred junior and senior high youth in western Canada shows that youth want youth workers they can relate to, who understand them, and with whom they can talk about their problems. These needs require that youth workers be prepared to counsel youth. Youth are relational, and often want to relate to their youth worker as a friend. Counseling, however, often demands a more professional relationship and youth workers need to know how to draw the line between the two. The course will, in its initial stages, concentrate on the issue of a being a friend versus being a counselor.

The course is designed to help those working in youth ministry deal constructively with the tensions and counseling situations that commonly arise. These situations include family tensions, adolescent growth, teen sexuality, and interpersonal conflicts. Issues best referred to professional counselors are also identified and discussed.

The course will concentrate on issues of adolescent development. Kaplan states that, "How much and in what ways the preconditions of infancy and childhood will exert their influence on adulthood is largely contingent upon the solutions that emerge during the adolescent passage" (Kaplan 1984, p.109). This statement clearly enunciates the importance of adolescence as a time of leaving childhood and entering adulthood. Many parents, teachers, and youth workers have experienced the jolt of talking to a youth on an adult level. But, in the middle of the conversation a change occurs; without notice, the youth is now talking like a child. Youth workers need to gain knowledge, appreciation, and applied understanding of the nature of adolescence. Mitchell says that "It is the moral responsibility of adults to assist youth in negotiating the minefield adolescence has become in the past few decades" (Mitchell, 1996 p.viii Introduction). This statement is an apt description of youth work, and counseling is central to such an enterprise as is an understanding of adolescence.

Intents of the Course

During this course, the student will:

1. Become more knowledgeable about developmental issues of adolescents.
2. Become more knowledgeable about the familial issues which youth encounter.
3. Gain knowledge regarding critical issues which a counselor deals with in counseling youth.
4. Gain skills in listening and attending to the needs of youth.
5. Become aware of and gain knowledge of interventions that help youth with issues they present to you. This will include knowing when you should seek professional help through referral.
6. Become aware of appropriate referral agencies for assisting youth.

Required Text: Olson. G. K.(1984 revised). Counseling teenagers. Group Books,

Course Requirements

Students will

1. Read the required text.
2. Become active members of a skills training group. This activity will require students to role play as observers, youth, and counselors. A critical incident report of one session is required. (See attached for outline about writing up a critical incident.)
3. Complete a take home final exam (see attached)
4. Write a research paper of approximately 3500 words. The purpose of the research paper is to help inform real-life situations youth workers encounter. Choose and research one of the topics below. Papers should include: (a) background information on the topic, (b) how your topic can be applied in a relevant manner to youth work, (c) the implications for ministry, and (d) how to understand this topic theologically.

Suggested Topics:

(1) Youth and sexual issues e.g. (one of these sub-topics only: unplanned pregnancy, premarital sex, sexual identity and formation, etc.).

(2) Youth and identity formation: developmental issues, peer group identity, friendship, etc.

(3) Youth in crisis: suicide, divorce in the family, death, substance abuse, etc.

(4) Youth as part of a family system.

(5) Key issues in counseling youth.

(6) Spiritual formation in youth.

You can meet with the instructor to choose a topic of your choice.

Course Content

- The role of the counselor in the counseling session
- Observing boundaries in the counselor/counseled relationship
- Adolescent development
- Crisis areas for youth
- Family systems
- How to listen in a counseling session
- How and when to make referrals
- Spiritual formation in youth

Course Evaluation

1.	Class attendance and participation	10%
2.	Reading Report (see attached)	10%
3.	Critical incident report	20%
4.	Final take home exam	30%
5.	Research Paper	30%

Critical Incident Report

What is a critical incident?

A critical incident is virtually any important incident that happens to us and makes us question what we know. Sometimes, until much later, we do not reflect upon the event or realize its impact upon our lives until much later. Some events are quite dramatic, others much less so. Nevertheless all are important. There are usually a number of factors common to critical incidents:

- We know that something important is happening or has happened.
- They impact us at both a cognitive and emotional level.
- They often challenge us in many ways. Sometimes they illuminate our inadequacies; at other times they confirm what we already know.
- They help us shape our understanding of ourselves and our world.

Purpose of the critical incident report

We grow as persons and caregivers by becoming more reflective about what is happening to us and around us. To become more effective caregivers we must take time to analyze and reflect upon what we are doing, thinking, and feeling. One way to reflect is by writing a "critical incident."

What should be included?

The critical incident report should be no more than eight double-spaced pages. It should address the following topics.

1. Describe the incident, what it was about, or what was said or done.
2. What were you feeling at the time? Describe your emotions.
3. What was your response or reaction?
4. What made the event significant for you?
5. What issues, questions, or problems did it raise for you?
6. Have you gained new insights about yourself, others, the world or yourself?

Course Syllabus

Spiritual Formation

Course Description

This course is intended to help students develop a relevant and meaningful relationship with God.

Intents of the Course

The purpose of this course is to help students:

1. Understand Christian spiritual formation from both a Biblical and historical perspective.
2. Critically reflect on their own spirituality
3. Become more knowledgeable about how spirituality is formed and enhanced.
4. Gain opportunities to practice basic principles of Christian spiritual formation.

Required Texts

Bridges, Jerry. (1983). The practise of godliness. Colorado Springs: NavPress.

Foster, Richard J. (1988). Celebration of discipline: The path to spiritual growth. New York: Harper and Row.

Webster, Douglas D. (1991). Finding spiritual direction. Downers Grove, Ill.: Intervarsity Press.

Course Requirements

Each student will:

1. Read the required texts, plus any other readings given in class, and write a brief book report for each required text.
2. Maintain a personal daily journal documenting their spiritual journey. Keeping of a journal will help promote the discipline of personal reflection. To enhance its confidential nature, the journal will not be read but will be shown to the instructor at the end of the course.
3. Participate in a 24 hour spiritual retreat.
4. Write a paper on a topic of spiritual discipline of their choice. The paper will consider (a) the historical roots of the discipline, (b) the current status of the discipline, (c) an assessment of the relevancy of the discipline for our time, and (d) your own personal response regarding the importance and relevancy of the discipline. The paper will not exceed six double-spaced pages.
5. Write a second paper on the topic of their own spiritual journey. The paper should incorporate principles of spiritual formation discussed in the class and the texts. The paper will include: (a) a brief description about the beginnings of your spiritual formation; (b) a reflection on where you are now in the journey; (c) a brief outline of future expectations for your journey; and, (d) a description of some processes by which you will try to achieve the rest of the journey. This paper is not to exceed six double-spaced pages.

Course Content

The course will include the following:

- Presentations of models of spiritual formation through biographical sketches
- A study and practice of the following disciplines:
    - prayer
    - theological reflection
    - meditation
    - Bible study
    - silence
    - care
    - nurture
- How spirituality is formed
- How to conduct retreats for yourself and others

Course Evaluation

Reading and book reports	15%
Journal	15%
Papers (Spiritual Disciplines)	35%
(Spiritual Journey)	35%

Course Syllabus

Educational Task of the Church

Course Description

One could say that *education* is a metaphor for life. All of life offers the opportunity to learn and to construct new knowledge. Jesus, of course, was the master teacher. For him, learning (education) was important. The importance of education has not changed. What has changed is how we learn and the tools available for learning. For example, our grandparents and many of our parents did not have to have computer literacy to get a job or function in college or university. The term *computer literacy* would have made little sense to our grandparents.

This course is designed to stress the importance of lifelong learning. It will examine the major educational challenges for the church in the 1990's and 2000 and will help us address these challenges. We will examine the needs of all ages and ask how the church can create a comprehensive educational framework. Special attention will focus on the needs of youth, since this is a course for youth workers.

The 1990's have not been kind to many churches. Few churches have taken their educational task seriously. Few churches have updated their approach to teaching and learning. This course will look at how we learn, the best clue as to how we ought to teach. Some critics say that churches do not expect their people to learn. Few church leaders would agree, however, when we look at the teaching methods used in many churches we must agree that critics have a point.

The previous discussion points to the importance of evaluating our educational programs. This course will stress evaluation, unique approaches to evaluation, and who should be involved in the evaluative process.

The class itself will model what is taught. Every class will be a lab. The course text *Why Nobody Learns Much of Anything at Church and How to Fix It* lends itself to the style of learning we will use during the class sessions. This recent publication by Group Publishers is a more serious treatment of the educational challenges facing the church than perhaps the title would suggest and is a readable addition to any Youth Worker's library. A second text used will be *Christian Religious Education: Sharing our Story and Vision* by Thomas H. Groome.

Intents of The Course

During this course, the student will:

1. Develop a personal philosophy of education and learn how to help others do the same.
2. Gain a clear understanding of the major educational challenges facing the contemporary church.
3. Gain a clear understanding about how people learn at various stages in life.
4. Gain a clear understanding about how to design curriculum and particular lesson plans.
5. Learn to evaluate curriculum and one's own teaching.
6. Learn to design and evaluate an educational plan for a whole church, camp,

or other programs used through parachurch groups.

7. Create new knowledge about the educational task of the church.

Required Texts

Schultz, Joan and Thom. (1993). Why nobody learns much of anything at church and how to fix it. Loveland, Colorado: Group Publishers.

Groome, Thomas H. (1980). Christian religious education: Sharing our story and vision. San Francisco: Harper.

Hendricks, Howard et al. (1991). Mastering teaching. Portland: Multnomah Press.

Course Requirements

Students will

1. read the text by Thom and Joan Schultz and the assigned readings from Groome. A four-page report on the text by Thom and Joan Schultz is due midway through the course.
2. make a class presentation of about 45 minutes on a topic of their choice in consultation with the instructor.
3. make one Field Trip (it can be to their own church) to observe working models of topics covered in class or of interest to them.
4. complete a final project at the end of the course. Students should discuss their project ideas with the instructor. The project can be practical, such as evaluating a program or a Sunday School. It can also be library research work. The

completed project should not exceed 8-10 pages double spaced.

Course Content

The course will deal with the following topics:

(1) How do people learn at various stages in life?

(2) How do we design teaching methods based upon how people learn?

(3) How do we design curriculum?

(4) How do we plan a lesson or Bible study?

(5) What's a philosophy of education? And, how do we create one?

(6) Why is it so difficult to learn anything in church?

(7) How can we effect change in a church?

(8) How can we design an effective method for evaluating educational programs?

(9) What do you want to learn? (During the first class each student will have an opportunity to express what he/she wants to learn in this class.)

Personal class comments re: course expectations

I had the opportunity to teach this particular course as part of my research and believe it is valuable to include the comments given by students during the first class. These comments immediately changed the course, because the students' history influenced the curriculum. These comments also demonstrate that students are never ahistorical. Each brings experiences and expectations to a learning situation that influence the curriculum. The following students' comments were made about course expectations:

1. "I would like to learn more effective and creative ways of educating and communicating to the church as a teacher."
2. "I am not sure what to expect."
3. "I want application to the local church about how to do effective instruction in Bible and Christian living."
4. "I want to learn the theological foundation of Christian Education. Also I want to learn skills and strategies for integrating community life into the Sunday School."
5. "I want to find the best way to teach young adults. I also want to become familiar with resources, where to find them and how to evaluate them."
6. "I would like to learn how to teach youth in a changing climate of interest and methods of learning. I want to know if the traditional classroom setting for teaching has become ineffective for today's youth. Is it possible to integrate Christian youth and secular youth in an effective Christian teaching setting?"
7. "I want to improve my own teaching methods and lead the church into a revitalized program of Christian Education."
8. "I have quite strong feelings about the role of education for youth and adults in the church, and want to equip myself as best I can. I am hoping to come away with some tools to make my teaching more effective."
9. "I want to learn your philosophy of Christian Education."
10. "I would like to be a better teacher and learn how to help others improve their teaching."

11. “I want to learn new skills for teaching and how to design an education plan.”

12. “I have been thrust into a position of doing a lot of Christian Education work, including training teachers, and I am not sure what I am doing.”

Course Evaluation

1.	Class attendance and participation	20%
2.	Book Report	20%
3.	Class Presentation	20%
4.	Final Project	40%

Course Syllabus

Living Theologically

Course Description

As Christians, we are part of a community that has a story. The story is both the community's and God's. Therefore, to gain knowledge of the story and to be part of it, we must live and think theologically. To live and think theologically means that we look at life through the lens of our Christian faith and commitment. To view life in this manner, our foundation must be informed by an understanding of the Christian beliefs.

To live and think theologically also means we must understand the implications of our beliefs for everyday life. This course will look at the main Christian doctrines presented in the biblical message, as well as those taught throughout church history. The context for surveying the past record of the community of faith is the present. A connection needs to be made if we are to think, in current or present terms, theologically and also to live theologically. We can only live in the present, so this is the present context for our theologically knowledge and application of that knowledge.

Intents of the Course

The purpose of this course is to help students:

1. Gain knowledge about the biblical and historical doctrines of the church community.
2. Construct new knowledge about what it means to live as a Christian in the

present.

3. Develop skills in evaluating theological understandings portrayed in contemporary culture.
4. Gain knowledge regarding the implications of Christian doctrine for contemporary living.

Required Texts

Grenz, Stanley J. and Olson, Roger E. (1996). Who needs theology?: An introduction to the study of God. Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity.

Shaw, Mark. (1993). Doing theology with Huck and Jim. Downers Grove, IL.: Intervarsity.

Course Requirements

Students will:

1. Read the required texts and do a four-page, double-spaced report on each. These reports are due midway through the course.
2. Choose a major doctrine and do a six to eight-page, double-spaced paper which describes their understanding of the doctrine. Students can draw from insights gained in class and from readings. The paper will conclude with a brief discussion of the implications of the doctrine for personal life and ministry. The due date for this paper will be announced at the first class.
3. Write a five-page, double-spaced paper which describes and interacts with the

theology presented in a popular cultural expression of your choice (such as the lyrics to Bette Midler's *From a Distance*).

Course Content

The course will include the following topics:

- How we "do" theology
- How we do theology in context
- Knowing God
- Knowing ourselves (humanity)
- The identity of Jesus
- The mission of Jesus
- The person of the Spirit
- The nature of the church
- Being part of the community
- Pertinent theological issues for the present

Course Evaluation

1.	Class attendance and participation	15%
2.	Book Reports	25%
3.	Doctrine paper	30%
4.	Popular Culture paper	30%

Course Syllabus

Administration for Youth Workers

Course Description

In "ministry" circles management is not often seen as a high priority. Management is perceived to be about "things," while ministry is about people. Youth Workers could fall into this dichotomy if they are not assisted through resources such as curriculum. The data from interviews and workshops indicate that youth workers need to learn administration -- in the broad sense of planning, organizing, and keeping good records. However, the key components of youth ministry, as seen by both the youth workers and the youth, are relational. As a result, it is easy to forget the administrative side and eventually become overwhelmed due to lack of organization and good planning. Because administration is essential to the overall ministry, it is important that youth workers get help in this area.

Youth Workers in churches often view themselves, as do their churches, as pastors. The pastoral designation is a professional term which implies a "caregiver" and tends to orient workers towards people concerns and the avoidance of the administrative components of their roles. Luecke and Southard cite research done by Kuecke which compared the professional perspective of pastors with their organizational perspectives. The findings suggest that pastors who were synthesizers, bringing together the professional caregiver with the organizer, tended to be more adept at fulfilling their roles

(Luecke and Southard 1986 p.16). This course subscribes to this same theory that the professional role of caregiver in youth work needs to be integrated with the administrative role.

The course will deal with actual case study situations presented and critiqued in class. Both the instructor and students will present case studies. The course will also deal with management theory and practices applied to the church, particularly youth work, and models which are not necessarily applied to the church but which could be. Susan Silver's work will be used in class. Silver writes for a wide audience and presents a good balance between time management approaches to organization and values or goals approaches. "Positively Organized! does not mean being compulsively organized or perfectly organized. It's being only as organized as you need to be" (Silver 1991,p.5). I believe Silver's emphasis fits the needs of youth workers. The course is not an attempt to make super administrators of youth workers but to help them be as organized and knowledgeable about administration as they need to be.

Intents of The Course

The purpose of this course is to help the student:

1. understand the components of church administration.
2. gain knowledge and skills in program development.
3. learn how to manage time by setting priorities.
4. learn how to develop plans.
5. learn how to set and keep a schedule.

6. learn how to deal with emergencies.
7. learn how to make presentations and reports.
8. learn how to find resources for your work.

Required Texts

Luecke, David S. & Southard, Samuel. (1986). Pastoral administration: Integrating ministry and management in the church. Waco: Word Books.

Silver, Susan. (1991). Organized to be the best: New timesaving ways to simplify and improve your work. Los Angeles: Adams-Hall Publishing.

Course Requirements

Students will:

1. Read both texts and submit a four-page, double-spaced report on each midway through the course.
2. Present a case study of some administrative issue they face in their work. Case study material will be presented in class by the instructor. Case studies will form a major portion of the class format. Students will be given clear demonstrations and material about how to write up a case study.
3. Interview someone involved in administrative work and write up the interview covering the following topics: (a) A brief introductory description of the role of the person being interviewed. (b) What are some of the biggest challenges they face in administration? (c) What are some of the emerging new issues or trends?

(d) How do they stay current in terms of resources? (e) What have been the most helpful resources for them in accomplishing their goals? and (f) What knowledge have they found most important in their work? You should conclude your write-up by applying the interview to your own life and work. This write-up should not exceed ten double-spaced pages.

(Note that you should choose the person to be interviewed carefully and discuss your plans with the instructor before setting up the interview. The instructor can suggest people willing to be interviewed if you have difficulty finding someone.)

4. Complete a take-home exam given towards the end of the course. The exam will consist of a list of six administrative situations youth workers often face. Pick any three and demonstrate some knowledge of the issues involved, the organizational approach that seems best from your reading in the area, and how you would approach the challenge. The final paper should not exceed, but be approximately, twelve double-spaced pages.

Course Content

The following topics will be covered in class:

- How do we integrate administration and caregiving?
- Why is administration important to youth work?
- How does administration help people?
- What are the administrative dynamics of working with volunteers?
- How do administrators deal with conflict?

- How is good communication important to administrators?
- What knowledge do you need to be well-organized?
- How do you use your computer to good advantage?
- How do you keep information in a usable format?
- What are the dynamics of working on a team?

Course Evaluation

1.	Book Reports	15%
2.	Class participation	15%
3.	Case study presentation	15%
4.	Interview paper	15%
5.	Final exam	40%

Course Syllabus

Leadership

Course Description

One key expectation of youth workers is that they provide leadership for the youth they work with in churches, camps, and community centres. The data in my research shows that youth workers, perhaps as much as teachers and parents, have an opportunity to provide leadership education for youth and help motivate them towards the goal of being a leader. Therefore, the knowledge of leadership, both its theory and practice, is important for youth workers. This course is designed to assist youth workers in their role as leaders who will influence and guide future leaders.

Warren Bennis, who has spent his life being a leader and studying leadership, says "The study of leadership isn't nearly as exact as, say, the study of chemistry. For one thing, the social world isn't nearly as orderly as the physical world, nor is it as susceptible to rules" (Bennis 1989, p.1). When we deal with leadership we are not dealing with a subject that can be mastered by following a formula. You will be confronted in this course with the notion that leadership has a great deal to do with one's own knowledge of self, the world, and the ability to express yourself fully. Bennis states that, "The key to full self-expression is understanding one's self and the world, and the key to understanding is learning - from one's own life and experience" (Bennis 1989, p.3). A leader is able to construct knowledge from life and experience.

The course will critically study and analyze people from many walks of life who have been acknowledged as leaders. You will be challenged to see how they gained knowledge from their experiences. Their knowledge will be valuable to you as will your ability to discover how you can construct knowledge from your own life and experience. This course is based on an assumption that you can best learn leadership by studying leaders and not merely theories of leadership.

Leadership is always exercised within a context, and the largest context is our world. Both globally and locally major paradigmatic shifts have significantly affected the exercise of leadership. Kennon Callahan addresses the church and those who work within it on the subject of leadership. Callahan boldly states that "The day of the professional minister is over. The day of the missionary pastor has come" (Callahan 1990 p.3). Callahan deals both with a major change in our world and with the necessity of the pastor in a North American context to read the culture like a missionary who might go to another country.

This course will ask you to interact between the work of three scholars -- Bennis, Callahan, and Lipman-Blumen- all of whom bring rich insights, good research, and contemporary views on how one functions as a leader. Lipman-Blumen also brings the female approach to this crucial issue of study.

Gender is an important issue for youth workers and needs to be an explicit part of the curriculum. Lippman-Blumen's main thesis is that leadership has changed radically and that traditional leadership behaviours are obsolete. The new era of leadership is marked by the contradictory forces in our world of diversity and interdependence (Lipman-Blumen 1996, p.3). In this radically-changed environment, inclusion and ability to establish connections and maintain them are important. Lipman-Blumen sees the marks of what she calls the Connective Era at all levels of organization and human activity. They are in "politics and government, business and industry, education and religion" (Lipman-Blumen 1996 p. 9).

Intents of the Course

The purpose of this course is to help students:

1. Understand models of leadership, especially contemporary models.
2. Gain an understanding of the nature of leadership.
3. Understand issues relating to youth leadership.
4. Practice leadership skills.
5. Analyze their leadership styles.

Required Texts

Bennis, Warren. (1989). On becoming a leader. Reading, Mass: Addison-Wesley Publishing.

Callahan, Kennon L. (1990). Effective church leadership: Building on the twelve keys. New York: Harper&Row.

Lipman-Blumen, Jean. (1996). The connective edge: Leading in an interdependent world. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Course Requirements

Students will:

1. Read the required texts and complete a one-page report on each text. The page should include a proper bibliographic reference to the text, a brief description of its main idea, and reference to one aspect that was helpful to you.
2. Research the lives and work of leaders and isolate ways in which leaders learned from their own experience. These leaders are people who have either written extensively or much has been written about them. At the first class students will be given a list of leaders from various walks of life. Students will be asked to answer the question, "How did these leaders apply the knowledge gained to the exercise of leadership?" This paper should be ten to twelve double-spaced pages.
3. Isolate and make explicit in written form at least four experiences in their lives which have or could help them construct knowledge about leadership. Relate these experiences to topics covered in class and/or issues addressed in the readings. This paper should be eight to ten pages double-spaced.

Course Content

The following topics will be covered in the class:

- Types of knowledge valuable to leaders.
- Profiles of six significant but very diverse leaders.
- Paradigmatic shifts which have dramatically affected styles of leadership.
- Putting leadership in context: culture, community, relationships, and values.

- A close examination of the major ideas of Bennis, Callahan, and Lipman-Blumen.
- Leadership and the issue of gender.
- Transferable concepts in leadership.
- Leadership and ethics.

Course Evaluation

1.	Reports on the three texts	15%
2.	Class participation	15%
3.	Paper on leaders' profiles	30%
4.	Paper on your own leadership development	40%

Course Syllabus

Family Life

Course Description

Youth workers, by the very nature of their work with youth, touch families. The research has shown that youth workers are very conscious of this fact. They need to interact with parents. They see and experience things with youth that would be helpful to share with parents. They can be interpreters of the youth culture to parents. They can be allies with parents by assisting in the maturation of their children.

Catherine and Joseph Garia-Prats (1997) have collaborated as a husband and wife team in the book, Good Families Don't Just Happen. They bring the perspective of parents of ten children and the professional background of a teacher and a physician. They observe that "All of us are part of a family. Each family has its own characteristics, personality, strengths, weaknesses, joys, and sorrows" (1997, p. 17). This statement is true of youth. They are all part of a family and much of what is part of that family system is embodied in them.

Youth workers need to understand the family system if they are to work effectively with youth. They also need to understand the family if they are to work with parents. Steinberg and Levin (1997 revised) have written an important book, You and Your Adolescent: A parent's Guide for Ages 10-20. Steinberg, a professor of psychology and Levine, a specialist in human development, address the issues of adolescence in the context of family. Parents are their audience. They say, "Few parents are totally prepared for the onset of adolescence" (1997, p. 27). There is much that parents do not understand about their teen-age children. Why are they suddenly more interested in friends than family? These simple issues can bring stress and misunderstanding in the family relationships. Youth workers who understand and have knowledge of families and adolescents can be good allies to youth and their parents.

Therefore, this course will concentrate on the family and understanding the family as a system. It will, more particularly, focus upon the family with adolescents. What are the special demands on this family? What do adolescents need from parents? What support systems do parents of adolescents need?

Intents of the Course

The purpose of this course is to help students:

1. Understand families as systems.
2. Appreciate the role that families play in a child's development.
3. Understand the various ways families are described and understood today.
4. Develop new knowledge about family life.
5. Develop new knowledge about families of adolescents.
6. Learn ways in which they can help parents relate to their adolescent children.
7. Learn ways to help adolescents relate to their parents.
8. Explore ways in which they can interact with parents and youth.

Required Texts

Garcia-Prats, Catherine M. and Joseph A. (1997). Good families don't just happen . Holbrook, Massachusetts: Adams Media Corporation.

Levine, Anne and Steinberg, Laurence. (1997) revised. You and your adolescent: A parent's guide for ages 10-20 . New York: Harper Perennial.

Course Requirements

Students will

1. Read assigned sections from the texts and submit a ten-page, double-spaced report on their reading.
2. In groups, assigned in class, design interview questions to be used with an adolescent and his or her family.
3. Interview a family using the sheet designed in class. (**Note the questions must first be assessed by the instructor. Students must also gain written permission to interview the family. All material will remain anonymous)**
4. Submit a final paper describing how your own family system has shaped your life. You are not expected to name family members or write about matters which would be embarrassing to your family. For example, your parents might be divorced. The divorce is public knowledge but the details might be quite private. Both the interview and this paper are to permit you to gain skill and understanding in recognizing the impact of family upon an individual.

Course Content

The course will:

- Look at the family as a system.
- Look at the particular challenges faced by families of adolescents.
- Explore why adolescents have problems relating to parents.
- Explore why parents have problems relating to their adolescent children.
- Explore particular ways and programs which youth workers can use to help parents and adolescents
- Examine how the youth worker can help in time of crisis.
- Have parents and adolescents participate in some class time.

Course Evaluation

Reading Report	25%
Group Activity in Class	10%
Interview	25%
Final Paper(Family System)	40%

Course Syllabus

Communications

Course Description

Communication is vital to life. Even as life begins we find ways to communicate needs. Qubein (1997) speaks of a baby being born and says

> It will learn to form these neonatal wails into words. Later it will learn to put those words on paper and log them onto computer disks. It will learn to send them across many miles through fiber-optic cables, through radio signals bounced off orbiting satellites, through feats of technology not yet imagined (p.3).

Youth workers find themselves involved in many situations which demand communication skills. They need to write reports, give oral presentations, prepare advertisements, work with the internet, and lead small groups. Research has shown that youth workers are conscious of the demands upon them to be good communicators. Therefore, it is important that they become knowledgeable about communications and skilled in communicating.

This course will stress understanding of communications and the application of that knowledge. A focus of communications for youth workers are the youth with whom they work. Witz (1997) says, "It is necessary to understand the composition of the audience so that you can fine-tune your level of presentation to meet their level of comprehension" (p.96). The course will stress communications with youth, and how youth leaders need to know their intended audience. Other basic features which make a person a good communicator will be examined and practiced during the class.

Intents of the Course

Through this course the student will be helped to:

1. Understand the process of good communication.
2. Gain some mastery of basic communication skills.
3. Understand that communication is always personal.
4. Understand the value of words.
5. Understand the value of the messenger.
6. Gain an appreciation that listening is part of communication.
7. Gain an understanding of some of the things which confuse communication.

Required Texts

Qubein, Nido R. (1997). How to be a great communicator: In person, on paper, and on the podium . New York: John Wiley and Sons.

Witz, Marion. (1997). Stand up and talk to a 1000 people: And enjoy it . Toronto: McLeod Publishing.

Course Requirements

Students will

1. Read the text, How to be a Great Communicator, and do an eight-page, double-spaced report.
2. Give a 10-minute presentation in class on a topic chosen from a list discussed in the class. In the presentation students are required to demonstrate six principles which enhance communications. The presentation must also demonstrate three distinct methods of communicating with an audience.
3. Present a major communications project. The project should demonstrate understanding of communications theory and practice. The project will be the equivalent of a twelve-page, double-spaced paper. It can be a speech which you have written and analyzed. It can be a video of a presentation you have made. It can be a critical analysis of another work. If you choose the latter, the work you are analyzing needs to be included. Other ideas will be discussed in class and you will also be given time to present your own proposal to the instructor.

Course Content

The course will cover the following topics:

- Understanding communications as a process.
- Understanding that communications is personal.
- Understanding the value of words.
- Understanding the value of the messenger.

- Communications in the workplace.
- Communicating one-on-one.
- Listening as part of communications.
- Special challenges faced by youth workers.
- Gender sensitive communications.
- Cross-cultural communications.
- Understanding your audience.
- The power of illustration and story in communications.
- The importance of dialogue

Course Evaluation

Reading report on the text	20%
Class presentation	30%
Major project	50%

Curriculum Evaluation:

What follows is an evaluation of a total curricular program and not just one course. Therefore, I have proposed that aspects of the program be viewed from three different paradigmatic perspectives. This approach is similar to the one I took in the design of my research. However, some aspects are different and its application is quite different in this case. Some research methodologies can also be applied to program evaluation. Repetition is necessary to show which aspects from the research design can also be used in the program evaluation.

There is value in looking at a program from the three perspectives: empirical-analytical, situational interpretive, and critical interpretive. Each perspective has strengths in what it reveals and each has limitations in what it is not capable of revealing. To obtain the fullest view of a program a cross-paradigmatic evaluation is, I believe, the most useful approach.

An Empirical-Analytical Analysis of the Objectives

I propose in the empirical-analytical that a series of questions be generated in each area which will help determine if the objectives are being met and if they are being met with effectiveness and efficiency. The end result is a questionnaire for administrators and instructors which can be used to evaluate the program's objectives.

Objective # 1: The student will gain foundational knowledge and basic skills to function as a professional youth worker in a church. This objective implies a pre-determined end which, in turn, implies some means being implemented to achieve the end.

Questions:

- What determines readiness in this area, and how is it measured?
- Does the measurement use a standardized testing procedure or does the instructor determine readiness?
- What follow-up procedures occur when students move to positions in churches or church-related agencies?
- Is there a survey of students, after they have completed their course, to determine whether the youth worker curriculum has adequately prepared them for work with youth?
- What consultative procedures are employed by the administrators and instructors in the institutions using this curriculum? These procedures would be used with churches, camps, or other places where youth workers are employed to determine the criteria which determines readiness.
- Are norm-referenced criteria available to all instructors by which they can determine readiness?

Objective # 2: "The student will develop an increased self-awareness and acceptance of personal reality: talents, limitations, and responsibilities."

Questions

- What means are used to achieve this objective?
- Are established criteria used to determine an acceptable level of increased self-awareness and acceptance of personal reality?
- Is some type of psychological test instrument used? If so, what is it designed to measure?

Objective # 3: "The student will attempt to set realistic vocational goals"

- Is there a set of criteria which determines what is realistic?
- If these criteria exist, how are they determined to be appropriate?
- What means are employed to help the student formulate the necessary goals?
- What means are employed to help the student determine whether his/her goals are realistic?

Objective # 4 The student will be able to set additional goals for life-long learning.

- What means are employed to achieve this objective?
- How would one know if the objectives are achievable?
- How might others assist the student in this area?
- What follow-up procedures will be used to determine whether students actually set these goals?

Objective # 5: The student will gain a healthy self-esteem as a youth worker.

- What criteria determine the presence or absence of a healthy self-esteem?
- Who determines the presence of a healthy self-esteem? Is it the instructor or a mentor?
- What role does the student have in determining the presence of self-esteem?

Strengths and Limitations to Empirical-Analytical Approach

The empirical-analytical approach helps quantify and measure results. If we have an objective for students we can begin to discover how many achieved the objective and measure the degree of success or failure. If, for example, a survey exists that helps quantify terms it can probably be used to organize data into categories, or profiles into groups and sub-groups. For example, you can quickly discover how many students are taking full course loads. Our understanding of the program is seen through "the facts." This aids some areas of evaluation, but is not helpful in others. This approach gives an "external" view of the program and the people in it. It objectifies people and pictures people as being acted upon. Guba and Lincoln say that "conventional methodology does not contemplate the need to identify stakeholders and to solicit claims, concerns, and issues from them" (1989, p.58).

The empirical-analytical approach to evaluation helps us see the program but it does not provide insight into what it is like to be a youth worker. What is it like to be an instructor in this program? What is it like to mentor a youth worker? How does the program "hang together" on a daily or weekly basis? We are now asking the qualitative questions which are part of the Program situation. The type of information and knowledge which these questions solicit is information and knowledge about what it means to be part of this program, as a student, administrator, or instructor. What, for instance, authentic experiences produce a framework of knowledge which reveals itself in expressions of self-esteem?

To get at this knowledge and produce a different set of data, evaluation procedures must be different than in the empirical-analytical. Therefore, I propose three activities for conducting a situational-interpretive evaluation of the youth worker education program. The three activities I propose are:

1. I propose that the staff, administration, student representatives, church representatives, and camp representatives come together for a day of retreat to evaluate the program in a workshop format. An outside facilitator should be used for the workshop.
2. I would also use a largely unstructured interview format of a sample of the students in the current program, students from previous programs, administrators, and instructors.
3. The final approach would have one or more persons become involved in a participant-observer role within the program.

Aoki says that, in a situational-interpretive approach our, "concerns reflect an approach to evaluation in which evaluators show interest in the meanings those living in the situation give to a given curriculum experience" (1984, p9).

Evaluation Component#2: Situational Interpretive Understanding of Youth Worker Education Program

(a) Staff and Administrators Workshop

The activity most important in the situational interpretative is communication. Guba and Lincoln claim that, once stakeholders are identified, their claims, concerns, and issues need to be solicited. Furthermore, these claims, concerns, and issues need to be made known to the entire group (1989, p.42). The workshop format plus the use of an outside resource person helps facilitate this type of activity. The process for the workshop is quite straightforward and permits people to work in a directive manner (the role of the facilitator) and in a collaborative manner (the reason for having people work together). What follows is a fairly specific description of how the workshop would proceed and what types of data might be generated for evaluative purposes. The workshop format here is very similar to the one used with youth workers. However, the description is necessary because it is important to note who should be involved in the several phases. Again, I am indebted to Drs. Ken Jacknicke and Larry Beauchamp of the Department of Secondary Education at the at the University of Alberta for much of this design.

Step # 1: Current Situation

Participants would be divided into two groups of not more than five persons in each group. Each group should be a mixture of administrative staff and instructors. The group's task would be to establish a description of the current situation in the youth worker education program. Using chart paper, each group would be asked to list their descriptive statements on the paper and report and display their statements to the whole group. The statements would be anything a person wanted to communicate about the situation.

Step # 2: The Ideal Situation(The Target):

Working in the same groups and again using chart paper, participants would be asked to describe the situation as they would like it to be -- the target. The procedure here would be similar to the previous group activity in that groups would list their ideal descriptions and then display and report them to the entire group. By now, a lot of information has been generated that describes the current and ideal situation. Since few current situations are identical to the ideal, a gap becomes evident between the current and the ideal. The challenge is to work towards closing the gap.

Step # 3: Closing The Gap

At this point a whole-group discussion takes place comparing the two groups of lists -- the current situation and the ideal situation. Participants are asked to move into their groups and, using chart paper, develop goal statements which close the gap between what is (the situation) and what ought to be (the target or new situation). The groups would now report and display their goal statements. There is a probability of considerable overlap between the groups goals.

Step # 4: Goal Consolidation

Using a lunch break, the facilitator can now take time to consolidate the goals. The purpose of the facilitator's consolidation exercise can be two-fold. The facilitator does the preliminary work to eliminate the overlap but can also organize the consolidated statements according to the three paradigms. Some goal statements will fall easily into one of the three categories of empirical-analytical, situation- interpretive, or critical-interpretative. **(This last step differs from the format used in the research workshops.)**

The entire group, after the break, would critique the work done by the facilitator and clarify or modify the consolidated statements.

Step # 5: Establishing an Order of Priority

The entire group must decide which goals will receive priority. Several methods can be used to facilitate this process. One method is to give to each participant three "stick-on" dots which can be placed beside goal statements considered important. Participants can place all dots beside one statement if they want. Once the voting is done, a priority list emerges according to which statements have the greatest number of dots. The group now determines which prioritized goal it wishes to pursue with an action plan. The facilitator has already identified statements in terms of which paradigms they fit. This identification, if agreed to, will help determine how and what plans will be implemented.

If the goal's achievement lends itself to quantifiable measurement or concerns itself with increasing achievement in some measurable terms, the empirical-analytical paradigm is operative. For example, the goal might concern the need for more space, more instructors, or fewer students. However, some goals might be more concerned with meaning constructs, such as goals which might seek greater self-esteem. These goals are not easily measured in quantifiable terms and will demand a process which includes reflection by participants.

Step # 6: Force Field Analysis: (This procedure was not used in the research workshops.)

Every situation includes forces which work towards reaching a goal or forces that work against reaching a goal. Each small group could choose one or more of the goals selected for action plans and brainstorm forces working for or against each goal. The groups then would report and display their work.

Step # 7: Develop Activities

The entire group now has data which has been generated by the force field analysis. Using chart paper, each small group can suggest activities which strengthen the positive forces and eliminate or minimize the negative forces.

Step # 8: The Plan as Developed

In plenary, the group can classify the suggested activities as long-term and short-term. The group can decide which activities can be acted upon immediately and what steps have to take place to begin to implement other activities.

Summary

In the workshop activity described, a situational-interpretative evaluation occurs. People, including students, representing various aspects of the program are able to communicate those things which constitute the program for them. By contrasting the current situation with an ideal, people can communicate what is meaningful, relevant, and appropriate in the current program. They are also able to communicate how they would construct a targeted situation so that it can be more meaningful, relevant, and appropriate. People also quickly begin to communicate the perceived strengths and concerns within the program.

In a workshop dynamic it is also possible for a facilitator to help the group consider the program in its larger context of the educational institution, community, and specifically the education community.

Student, Instructor, Administrator Interviews

The purpose of the interviews, which would be largely unstructured, would be to open up experience and meaning of the situation more fully. From the student perspective one would want to know if students are treated in an ahistorical manner.

What have they brought to the program? How has what they have brought been used or built upon in the program? One would also want to discover what led a student to apply and become a part of the program. Are those expectations being realized; and, if so, in what way? How has the program affected theirs lives outside the home, workplace, or other social situations? How does the program affect their feelings about themselves?

Since the program objectives are of vital importance, I would want to ask questions which would help students reflect in these areas. I would want to know what atmosphere is created which aids or hinders the development of these objectives. If there are graduates of the program it would be important to sample this group to discover their reflections now that they have graduated. What, for them, have become the most relevant features of the program?

The instructors within the program are significant persons and need to be involved in a reflective interview process. They also need to reflect on the needs and concerns within the program. These people have a set period of time to help prepare youth workers for their vocation. What is this situation like for them, and what experiences do they have within this situation? Where do they feel supported? In what areas do they feel the lack of support? How do they view students? How do they work with the program's stated objectives?

A program such as the Youth Worker's Educational Program is wedged between at least two institutions -- the institution which owns and operates the program and the church which receives its graduates. If the program is within a larger operating college, administrators of that college need to be interviewed to gain their reflection about the program. Where does the program fit in their overall program of studies? What relevancy does it have to the total program of the college and the college's mission? Furthermore, leaders or staff people in the churches receiving the graduates need to be interviewed. Do they view the program as relevant to what they are doing? What are their concerns or needs about the program?

Participant Observation

A participant-observer can, by involvement and observation, produce a vivid analysis and description of intended learnings as well as secondary and unintended learnings. This particular activity also fits into the third paradigm of critical perspective. The main activity for evaluation in the critical perspective will be described in that section. However, data produced in this approach to evaluation can be valuable in both the situational perspective and the critical perspective. In the Youth Workers Educational Program it would be necessary for the participant-observer to observe each course in session. Involvement in other activities which might be part of the weekly activities in the program would also be helpful.

Instructors in the planned curriculum anticipate certain learnings. However, unanticipated and unplanned learnings often occur. In any situation, multiple learnings and constructions of meanings can and do take place. The skilled and sensitive participant-observer makes these matters to the fore and makes them explicit in a written analysis. Some of the most helpful and richest descriptions of educational situations I have read were written by persons involved in participant-observation (See Clark, 1990, pp 327-332). Merriam says, "Observation makes it possible to record behavior as it is happening" (1988, p88). One recent example from my own experience illustrates Merriam's claim. The situation I describe relates to a University College Entrance Program where I helped coordinate a team evaluation of that program.

I had an appointment to meet some of the staff. The agenda had been previously and mutually agreed to by both myself and the staff. What had not been planned was a personal crisis for a student in that program which needed immediate attention. My appointment was delayed, but the delay helped me observe the availability of staff to deal with student needs. I also waited in a common meeting area occupied by students and was able to interact with some of them and observe their interactions with one another and the secretary. In the planned situation, I would not have been afforded the opportunity to make these valuable observations which were included in the final report. Everything within the situation is important for the participant-observer.

Evaluation Component # 3: Critical Perspective

The purpose of this approach to the evaluation of the Youth Worker Education Program would be to make explicit beliefs, interests, assumptions, and relationships within the program. An example occurred with the observation experience reported above. In dialogue with the staff to collaborate my observations, one member said that students often relate to her as a parent. Nothing in her job description would suggest this would be the case. However, the staff agreed that this was a valuable function and one she fulfilled admirably. Only by posing questions, which caused her to reflect on this natural and unconscious relationship were we able to create a conscious conversation and recognize this as a valuable relationship within the program.

As an evaluator using the critical perspective, I would analyze carefully documents such as the statement of the philosophy of the program. Through participant-observation and posing questions in dialogue with program participants, I would try to make explicit parts of the program which are taken-for-granted. For example, the philosophy statement might list certain objectives. Are other important objectives not listed? Are any of the objectives listed not really essential to the program and curriculum-in-action? Do the objectives, by the way they are stated, give the impression or appearance of some action being done upon the student? Is there some intent that the actions will ensure students achieve? On the contrary, does the philosophy and the objectives reveal an approach which shows sensitivity towards students and an attitude of working with, and not upon, the student? The critical perspective in dialogue and question-posing would try to make these matters explicit.

An expressed purpose of the critical perspective is to cause self-reflection among administrators and instructors and reveal areas where change might be needed or appropriate. Aoki claims that the critical evaluation orientation is "seen within the dialectical framework of practical action and critical reflection, what Paulo Freire refers to as praxis" (1970, p206). The critical approach also helps reveal the various perspectives program participants might have of the program by encouraging them to reflect upon the program. The evaluator poses questions in dialog such as: Do the administrators see aspects of the program with a perspective that is different or in conflict with the staff? What are the perspectives of each staff person? Often it is helpful to have these perspectives clarified and to know the justification given for them. Clarifying the situation can help reveal areas where change is desired or needed.

The design proposal, thus far, has outlined the plan for obtaining information which would be valuable in an evaluation. The administrators of the program may choose to do an entire evaluation using all the components, or they may choose to do only one component. They may wish to modify any or all components. Two components are now left to be addressed: (1) The plan for reporting the results of the evaluation and (2) The plan for administering the evaluation.

Component # 4: The Plan for Reporting the Results

Because the Youth Workers' Education Program is only a proposed program, based upon my research, an evaluation has not been done. Therefore the following suggestions will be made at some future time. However, for an evaluation to be complete the following activities are necessary.

In the first part of the evaluation -- the empirical-analytical examination of the objectives -- a questionnaire will be used to obtain data. Examples of the types of questions used have already been provided. The data will be obtained from administrators and instructors in one questionnaire and obtained from students in the second. Both questionnaires will be assembled into a single compilation displaying data tables or graphs when necessary and appropriate. Such graphic displays are the best way to show percentages and profiles. A brief narrative will accompany the compilation of the data. It should include observations concerning the data and some preliminary recommendations.

In the situational perspective, the facilitator-evaluator will submit a final report of the workshop which should detail the statements presented by each group in its individual sessions. The report will include the findings from the group's force-field analysis and suggested activities for maximizing the positive forces and eliminating the negative forces. A statement of the plan adopted for implementing the goals will conclude the report.

The unstructured interviews of the administrator, instructors, students, and church personnel will be presented in a narrative report. The focus of this report will be the meaningfulness and relevancy of the program. The narrative will make explicit the viewpoints each person brought to the program. A final section will include observations and recommendations by the evaluator. The evaluator should check the validity of the report by discussing it with those interviewed. The interviews should be conducted on tape where permission is granted so that accuracy of information can be enhanced.

The participant-observation should produce a narrative report which gives a rich description of the phenomena being observed. The purpose of the narrative is to produce a descriptive account which makes explicit the meaningfulness of the program for those involved in it. This particular activity produces data for the critical-perspective and should reveal the taken-for-granted aspects of the program. The activity should be included in the report of the critical reflection done in collaboration with program participants. The latter would be a separate report and would also be a summative evaluation of the program from a critical perspective.

Component # 5: Plan for Administering the Study

A questionnaire, designed by a facilitator, will be given to administrative and instructional staff. Another survey will be given to students in the present program. A one-day workshop which includes administrators, instructors, student representatives, and church representatives will be held. Further, unstructured interviews conducted with administrators, instructors, and students will be conducted. A final activity will be the involvement of the evaluator as a participant-observation, for a week, to produce a critical interpretation.